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SECONDARY PRINCIPAL PERSPECTIVE: A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL
STRUCTURES OF TEAMING, COMMON PLANNING AND ADVISORY IN
LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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New York

by

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ABSTRACT

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL PERSPECTIVE: A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES OF TEAMING, COMMON PLANNING AND ADVISORY IN LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK SECONDARY SCHOOLS

William R. Galati

The purpose of the study was to determine the secondary principals perspective to their role; in addition, to their perception of common planning, teaming and the use of an advisory program as essential middle school priorities to prepare students to achieve, acclimate and be successful upon entering high school. The principals' views allowed for the researcher to present a distinctive set of data that may address the gap in the research literature on common planning, teaming and the use of an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level.

A self-administered online web survey was provided to secondary administrators to gather data on their perspective to the use and effective implementation of common planning, teaming and student advisory along with qualities of a building leader deemed necessary to overall support implementation and sustenance of these organizational structures. Quantitative statistical research techniques consisting of *descriptive statistics*, *ANOVA*, and *t-test* were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data which indicated general tendencies in the data (mean, mode, and median), the spread of the scores (variance, standard deviation, and range) and comparison of how one score relates to all others such as percentile rank.

The descriptive quantitative study found that principals had a higher affinity for maintaining strong working relationships with faculty and staff along with the desire to have a safe, inviting, inclusive and supporting the developmental needs of students to be

of importance in their leadership role. The study also found that middle school principals had a high affinity for organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory as opposed to junior high school and junior-senior high school principals having a higher affinity for only common planning and teaming.

This study may provide secondary administrators, superintendents, boards of education, legislatures and the New York State Department of Education with further insight and direction regarding organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in the education of students in secondary education under their leadership.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated in loving memory of my father, William R. Galati. It was through his exemplary work ethic, desire to persevere, be challenged along with the importance of schooling and family that gave me the fortitude and desire to achieve this goal. You are always in my thoughts.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

As students transition from one grade level to the next, there is a feeling of anxiety, questionable academic preparedness, uncertainty and social as well as emotional pressures confronting them as they progress through their educational and developmental pathway. During early adolescence, most public school students undergo school transitions, and many students experience declines in academic performance and social emotional well-being. Theories and empirical research have highlighted the importance of supportive school environments in promoting positive youth development during this period of transition (Kim, Schwartz, Capella & Seidman, 2014).

When adolescents move into middle school or high school, the anxiety is complicated further by other normative changes such as puberty, social and emotional development, the growing importance of peer relationships, and the development of higher order thinking skills (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006). The middle school is not just a physical place in which teachers teach about things needed in the future, it is an environment in which youth come of age, acting out new roles as maturing social beings (Lounsbury, 2009). The focus on developmental needs and educating the whole child serves as the foundation for making decisions that impact the school experience of students (Cook, Faulkner, & Howell, 2016). This is most evident as students transition from elementary school to secondary school.

Within the middle school years, students undergo physical and mental changes that potentially impact their overall development. At times, students are observed to struggle to adapt to change (structural, personal and environmental) experienced in their

schooling and unique to them. Despite growing interest in the social context of middle grade schools, and evidence for its influence on student adjustment, current understanding of middle grade school social context is limited in scope (Kim et al., 2014).

The middle school concept is a philosophy of education with a special spirit and deep theoretical roots – a set of beliefs about kids, education, and the human experience. The concept's ideals and recommendations are direct reflections of its two prime foundations, the nature and needs of young adolescents and the accepted principles of learning, both undergirded by a commitment to our democratic way of life (Lounsbury, 2009). In recognizing such indicators, it is essential for schools to provide appropriate structures to meet such unique student needs to engage, acclimate, organize, guide, support, establish relationships, and enrich students as they progress through their educational years. Supporters of the middle school philosophy promoted schools that were developmentally responsible and responsive. As such, structures and concepts such as teaming, advisory, student-centered learning, and integrated curricula became the cornerstones of such schooling models (Yoon, Malu, Schaefer, Reyes, & Brinegar, 2015).

This study investigated and identified, most specific to the middle school setting (grades 6-8) in Long Island, New York the leading organizational structures to support the academic as well as the social and emotional development of students as they transition from elementary to secondary school. According to Manning and Saddlemire (1996), upon implementing a middle level concept in secondary school, educators need to consider the following question: Considering the characteristics of our high school,

which concepts hold the most promise for (1) improving academic achievement, (2) improving student behavior, (3) fostering positive interpersonal relationships between students and between educators and students, and (4) enhancing the schools ability to address adolescents' cognitive and psychosocial needs.

For the purpose of this study, research is limited to organizational structures of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program implemented to students in middle school; specific to grades six through eight. Teaming and common planning time play a critical role in providing teachers with the opportunity to interact with one another to meet the needs of students, the teachers clearly acknowledge its importance in contributing to the professional atmosphere (Cook et al., 2016). Advisory groups provide students' social, emotional, and moral growth (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996). Effective transition programs address the academic and procedural concerns of students, as well as their very real social concerns (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006). When the middle school concept is implemented substantially over time, student achievement, including measures by standardized tests, rises, and substantial improvement in fulfilling the other broader, more enduring goals of education results (Lounsbury, 2009).

There are unique qualities of leadership specific to the role of the middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school principal to ensure the appropriate implementation to organizational structures of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as vehicles to support the overall educational development of students in middle school and beyond. Leadership is the key variable impacting and determining organizational performance and success as leaders develop a vision for change and influence others to share their vision (McFarlane, 2010). According to McFarlane

(2010), leadership is central in school improvement processes because almost everything depends on leadership and especially the prevailing district culture and school climate that develop over time as leadership practices affect the behaviors of principals, teachers, staff, and students.

It is the intent of this research to identify evidence that will link efforts of organizational structures (common planning, teaming and advisory) to improve and transform teaching and learning in order to best prepare students to meet and exceed educational goals and preparedness for life beyond schooling. Furthermore, the research will benefit the secondary educator (and administrator) to consideration the use (refinement and enhancement) of such organizational structures to support the development of students under their instruction (leadership).

Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave And Teddy Roosevelt warned: To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace in society (Lounsbury, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

The National Middle School Association's position paper, "This We Believe" identified elements of an exemplar middle school as: A balanced curriculum based on the needs of young adolescents; a range of organizational arrangements; varied instructional strategies; a full exploratory program; comprehensive advising and counseling; continuous progress for students; evaluation procedures comparable with the nature of young adolescents; cooperative planning; and a positive school climate (Valentine, Clark, Hackmann, & Petzko, 2004).

The Carnegie Corporation's report (1989) *Turning Points* (Jackson, Davis, Abeel, & Bordonaro, 2000) highlighted the needs for young adolescents. The report called for smaller schools, individualized attention, student-centered instructional strategies, encouragement of critical thinking and enthusiasm for learning, building level control, addressing of multiple learning styles, middle-level teacher certification, mutual respect and caring, and partnership among school, home and community (Nassau and Suffolk County Middle Level Principals' Association, Position Paper).

Middle schools increasingly have implemented concepts that have the potential to increase students' academic achievement, promote positive and human behaviors, and improve attitudes toward school (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996). The middle school model consists of multiple organizational structures. Such organizational structures supported through middle level research consist, but are not limited to the following: an academic advisory period; common planning period for teachers; a student-centered learning environment; exploratory course opportunities; interdisciplinary learning; instructional teaming; and thematic lesson implementation.

This study will be limited in research to organizational structures of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program. It is important to determine if such structures are present or absent in secondary schools. Additionally, to address implications on Long Island middle schools (junior high schools and junior-senior high schools) in assessing the effectiveness of organizational structures in the overall development of students' academic, social and emotional preparedness for secondary learning. Furthermore, to address the essential leadership qualities needed to be

bestowed by a secondary principal in order to support the middle school philosophy and the overarching development of the middle level student.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the secondary principals perspective to their role; in addition, to their perspective of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as essential middle school priorities to prepare students to achieve, acclimate and be successful upon entering high school. The principals' views will allow the researcher to present a distinctive set of data that may address the gap in the research literature on teaming, common planning and an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level.

Research Questions

1. What are the essential leadership qualities of Long Island secondary school principals in order to support organizational structures, deemed essential, to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations?
2. What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of teaming to support students in the secondary school setting?
3. What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of common planning to support students in the secondary school setting?
4. What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of an advisory program to support students in the secondary school setting?

Overview of Methodology

To conduct a descriptive quantitative study to examine the presence or absence of organizational structures; exclusively with regard to common planning, teaming and an advisory concept. The study will analyze results obtained from Long Island secondary principals of middle schools (specific to grades 6-8), junior high schools (specific to grades 7-8), and junior-senior high schools (specific to grades 7-8). A self-administered online web survey will be provided to secondary administrators to gather data on their perspective to the use and effective implementation of common planning, teaming and student advisory along with qualities of a building leader deemed necessary to overall support implementation and sustenance of these organizational structures.

Rationale and Significance

Middle school students experience aspects of anxiety, stress, lack of overall preparedness with respect to organizational skills and meeting objectives leading to academic success and achievement. The rationale for this study may provide secondary administrators, superintendents, boards of education, legislatures and the New York State Department of Education with further insight and direction regarding organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in the education of students in secondary education under their leadership.

The research and literature regarding middle school indicates that student learning is best supported when organizational structures of teaming, common planning, and advisory are inclusive within student learning and acclimated upon within the middle school setting. The State Education Department (SED) collects specific data from schools on a yearly basis inclusive of enrollment, average class size, free and

reduced-price lunch, attendance, student suspensions, teacher qualifications, staff counts and assessment results. However, lacks to address the significance and related outcomes of organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory on student learning.

The need for this study is also clearly identified as presented in the position paper of the Association for Middle Level Education, This We Believe; Keys to Educating Young Adolescents. As addressed in this position paper, there is evidence to support the organizational structures of teaming, common planning, and advisory with meaningful and reflective leadership insight and support required to support the diverse and forward thinking of educating middle level students.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher has been an educator for over 30 years and has served as a teacher and administrator in middle school, junior high school and a junior-senior high school construct. The researcher deems it important to research organizational structures of common planning, teaming and use of the advisory construct to assess the overall benefit in educating children in secondary education from the perspective of a secondary administrator. The researcher will conduct the study by providing a quantitative analysis based upon survey data gathered exclusively from secondary principals specific to the middle school environment.

Definition of Terms

Long Island

For the purpose of this study, Long Island is comprised of Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Nassau and Suffolk Counties are suburban areas east of New York City and

not included in the five boroughs of New York City. According to the US Bureau, Nassau County has a population of 1,339,532. Suffolk County is located east of Nassau County and according to the US Bureau has a population of 1,493,350.

Secondary School

Secondary school refers to schools that house part or all of grades 7-12.

Middle School

Middle school refers to schools that house students in grades 6-8.

Junior High School

Junior high school refers to schools that house students in grades 7-9.

Junior-Senior High School

Junior-Senior high school refers to schools that house students in grades 7-12.

School Organization

Organization of the program refers to how schools arrange the resources of time, space, and personnel for maximum effect on student learning (Danielson, 2002).

Variable

A characteristic of a person, place, or thing (Coladarci & Cobb, 2014)

Leadership

A phenomenon that occurs when one influences the direction people are going and unites them toward accomplishing a common goal (Stoner, 2016).

Advisory

Built on the notion that every young adolescent should have at least one caring adult at school to act as a mentor or advisor (Spear, 2005).

Teaming

The organization in which two or more teachers share the responsibility for instruction, curriculum, and evaluation of a common group of students for one or more years (Boyer & Bishop, 2004).

Common Planning

The time scheduled during the day for multiple teachers (or teams of teachers) to work collaboratively to best support the instruction of targeted curriculum, improve lesson quality, effectiveness of instruction and support student achievement. (Haverback & Mee, 2013).

Organization of Dissertation

In the chapters that follow, an in-depth literature review of the historical development of leadership characteristics essential to educate students in the middle school, junior-high school and junior-senior high school setting, followed by common planning, teaming and use of an advisory structure in educating students in secondary education. The methodology of the study will be presented followed by the findings, analysis and an interpretation of the data.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

In the spring of every year, young adolescents brace for the traditional rite of passage: leaving the nurturing, caring confines of the elementary school for the larger, competitive, and sometimes intimidating middle school (Parker, 2009).

Lounsbury (1992) identified that Junior high schools were introduced in 1910 specifically to meet students' varying needs and individual differences. According to Gatewood & Dilg (1975), without explicit guidelines or policies, junior high schools slipped into being mere junior versions of the high school (as cited in Boyer & Bishop, 2004). In the early 1960s, middle schools emerged. Like the junior high school, middle school philosophy was based on designing education to be relevant to the interests and needs of young adolescents. Unlike the junior high years, state and national policy statements helped to invigorate what was becoming a middle school movement (Boyer & Bishop, 2004).

The years 1963-1979 were identified as the beginning of the Middle School Movement and its search for an identity. The next decade, 1980 – 1989, was a time of advancement and progress, and the movement became identified with practices, such as team teaching, interdisciplinary curriculum, and advisory. The years that followed from 1990 – 1999, national policies came to action. In 2000-2009, research took place on middle school practices. As the years progressed it was important for the middle school best practices to be enhanced and practiced to support the academic and social as well as emotional development of students. An understanding of the middle school movement is

crucial as it provides insights into the challenges, successes, and issues that continue to define middle grades practices, research, and policy today (Schaefer, Malu, & Bogum, 2016).

The year 1963 is generally acknowledged as the beginning of the modern middle school movement (Schaefer, et al., 2016). As per Schaefer et al., 2016, during the years 1963-1979, scholars exchanged ideas in order to propose the middle school name and support its evolution. In 1963, William M. Alexander, the father of the middle school movement changed the name from junior high school to middle school was addressed. Gatewood (1970-1972), stated that a creative faculty and administration dedicated to discovering more effective approaches to early adolescent education are more essential for educational quality than grade level reorganization and school name changes (as cited in Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 5).

Brooks (1978) stated that in the mid to late 1970s, the total number of operational middle schools reached 4,060 (as cited in Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 5). As the middle school concept evolved, emphasis was given to curriculum development and teacher professional development. Importance of flexible scheduling, physical education, team teaching, student counseling, interdisciplinary curriculum, exploratory learning and understanding the developmental structure of the middle school student was emphasized. Four middle school practices dominated the literature through the 1990s: advisory, cooperative learning, teaming, and engaging students (Schaefer et al., 2016).

The Essential Elements of Standards-Focused Middle Level Schools and Programs evolved and became mandated by the New York State Department of

Education in CR100.4. The Essential Elements provided schools with the charge to deliver research-based programs in supporting academic and personal development for the middle level student. Emphasis was based upon six premises.

1. A philosophy and mission that reflects the intellectual and developmental needs and characteristics of young adolescents;
2. An educational program that is comprehensive, challenging, purposeful, integrated, relevant, and standards-based;
3. An organization and structure that supports both academic excellence and personal development;
4. Classroom instruction appropriate to the needs and characteristics of young adolescents provided by skilled and knowledgeable teachers;
5. Strong educational leadership and a building administration that encourages, facilitates, and sustains involvement, participation, and leadership;
6. A network of academic and personal support available for all students.

(New York State Middle School Association)

Decades	Themes of the Middle School Movement
1963-1979	The middle school movement begins
	Name change
	Emergent identity
1980-1989	The movement advances
	Practice and exploration
	Progress and change

	Policy and politics
1990-1999	Hope in the midst of storms
	Middle school structure
	Middle school practices
	The curriculum conundrum
2000-2009	Research-based models of middle school practice
	The middle school concept
	Interdisciplinary teams
	A signature middle school pedagogy
2010-2015	Restrictions and innovations
	National mandates
	International voices
	International influences
	Comparisons of middle school settings and practices
	Descriptive reports from abroad

Table 2.1 Themes of the Middle School Movement (Schaefer et al., 2016).

A Nation at Risk in 1983 focused on public schools, specifically high schools, with minor attention to elementary and higher education institutions. The report stated that American schools are failing (Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and more academic rigor in K-12 settings is needed. In 1986, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development was created and the seminal document, *Turning Points: Educating adolescents in the 21st Century* (1989), was published. This report made recommendations for changes in middle school education and policy. It further outlined

effective classroom practices and articulated challenges related to teaching and learning with early adolescents. The report recommended team teaching, common planning time, and other organizational structures. *Turning Points* referenced as a document that could help middle schools affirm their central practices and realize the goal to develop middle level school programs which carry enthusiastic learners into high school who still believe they can succeed intellectually. This focus on creating school structures that were responsive to middle level students' needs was the hallmark of the middle school movement in the 1990's (Schaefer et al., 2016).

Theoretical Framework

A theory for the schoolhouse should be idea based, and should emphasize moral connections It should strive to transform the school in such a way that it becomes a center of inquiry (Sergiovanni, 1996). Lundt (1996), a futurist, envisioned the middle school movement as dynamic rather than static and aimed at providing students with an emerging set of 21st century skills – exploring the unknown; viewing issues as interdisciplinary; collaborating; and working towards creating socially aware, diverse, global citizens (Schaefer et al., 2016). A vital challenge to the academic leadership field involves the need to develop leaders and leadership. Historically, leadership development targeted specific skills and competencies, while focusing on the diffusion of best practices (McCleskey, 2014). McCleskey (2004), postulates that existing leaders should receive skills and competency training aimed at developing their task-oriented or relational-oriented skill deficits. In both Organizational Theory and Situational Theory, there is an assumed vital role in supporting and defining essential organizational best practices in educating students. As schools strive for effective decision making, the role

of the school principal is that of the orchestrator in the processes of participatory decision making. The principal must be aware of the objectives to be accomplished by group decisions and must be knowledgeable in the various group decision-making models available. Effective schools research suggests that the principal's leadership is the most important factor in the school's performance (Pashiardis, 1993).

Organizational Theory

Owens (2004), addresses the emergence of new knowledge about how people function in organizations. He emphasizes that research and study modify our thinking and understanding in the educational organization. Furthermore, Owens addresses the importance of educational leaders to stay current of emergent relevant studies of organizational behavior. Owens (2004), speaks to the dynamic impact of changes in the larger society in which schools exist. Here, he addresses the ebb and flow of overarching changes that challenge social institutions to adapt to new conditions.

The educational leader, as referenced by Owens (2004), faces a career in which new, resilient responses are constantly required to meet the challenges that will inescapably and unremittingly arise in the future. Owens (2004), further addresses that in view of this unyielding progression, educational leaders need to develop not responses to the urgencies of the moment but rather a set of values, beliefs, and principles to guide them in developing effective strategies and actions in the ever-uncertain future. Together, these values, beliefs and principles mold and shape the educational leader's vision of what the school ought to be like, the direction in which it should be going, the end state that it should be striving for.

Owens (2004), summarizes in defining a core element in such a vision must be the ability to see the school as an adaptive organization that is able to detect emerging problems and to proactively develop effective solutions to them. He claims that a school administrator who does not have such a vision that is clear and well developed will struggle to be an effective educational leader.

Classical organizational theorists have sought to identify and describe some set of fixed principles that would establish the basis for management. The *Scholar Principle* addressed that authority and responsibility should flow in as direct and unbroken path from the top policy level down through the organization to the lowest member (Owen, 2004). Owens (2004), professes that U.S. school districts today frequently show vertical lines of authority and responsibility with little or no interconnection between operating divisions of the organization. Another classic principle of organization that Owens discusses is *Unity of Command* in that no one in an organization should receive orders from more than one superordinate. The *Exceptional Principle* holds that when the need for a decision recurs frequently, the decision should be established as a routine that can be delegated to subordinates. *Span of Control*, is the most widely discussed of the major ideas from classical organizational theory. The essence of the concept is to prescribe the number of people reporting to a supervisor (Owens, 2004).

Owens (2004), addresses that the major theme in organizational theory has been the interaction between organizational structure and people. It has been found that the structure of the organization is the prime determinant of the people in the organization.

Charles Perrow speaks to the illustration of the power of organizations to shape the views and attitudes and thus the behavior of participants (as cited in Owens, 2004).

Much of the literature of organizational theory is devoted to the view that people in the organization tend to shape the structure of the organization (Owens, 2004).

Attention is given to the impact of the behavior of people, in the processes of decision making, leading and dealing with conflict on the structure, values, and customs of organizations.

Situational Leadership Theory

Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model

The Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory draws major views from contingency thinking. The theory states that leadership depends upon unique individual situations where no single leadership style can be considered the best. The theory identifies that a good leader will be able to adjust their leadership to the goal of the objective to be accomplished. For a leader to be successful the leader must be capable to establish goals, have a capacity to assume responsibility, be educated and have experience.

Hersey and Blanchard defines that a leadership style has four basic behaviors consisting of participating, telling, selling and delegating. “Telling” behavior is unidirectional flow of information from the leader to the group. The “selling” behavior is where the leader attempts to convince the group that the leader should lead by providing social and emotional support to the individual being convinced. With “participating” behavior, the leader shares decision making with the group is supporting

democracy. “Delegating” is consisting of handing out tasks to group members where the leader is monitoring the people delegating with the tasks.

Leaders incorporating the situational leadership model must be able to adapt to their environment and use alternative leadership styles as deemed appropriate. A successful leader will need to understand the maturity of their followers and their readiness for task performance and adapt the leadership style that fits the situation.

Hersey-Blanchard identifies four maturity levels as it relates to decisions to be addressed, M1 through M4. The four levels range from low, moderate to high. The low level, M-1 identifies basic incompetence or unwillingness to complete the task. M-2 and M-3 are considered moderate levels. M-2 is where the individual has inability to complete the task, but has a willingness to do the work. M-3 has an insecurity that the work can be completed, but is capable of completing the task. M-4 is when the group is deemed ready and able to complete the task with a high level of maturity.

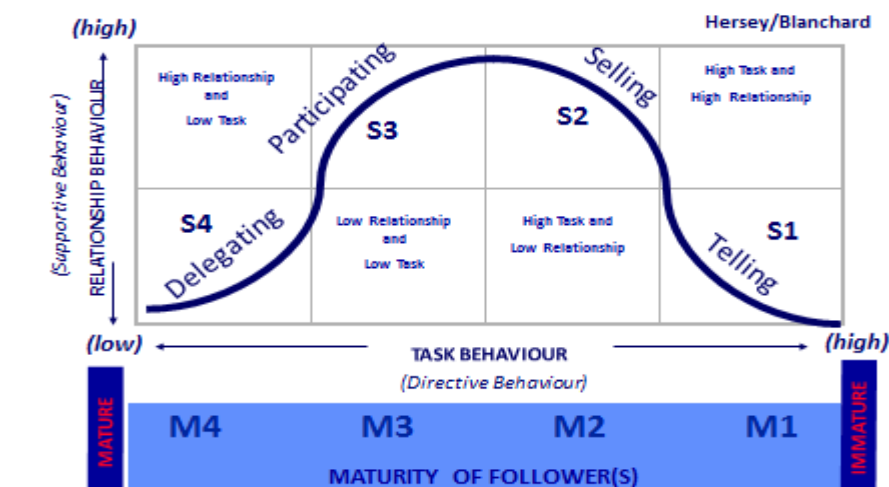


Figure 2.1: Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership Model.

Complementary to the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory is the Vroom-Yetton Decision Model. As Sergiovanni (1996) addresses, it needs to be recognized that position of power and expert power are often not shared by the same person, and yet both have rightful roles to play in schools. Such a theory needs to provide for new and better ways to connect people to each other, and their work, than our present emphasis on management systems and quality designs allow. Sergiovanni (1996), addresses that Community Theory forces us to understand leadership differently. The emphasis in community leadership is building a shared fellowship and the emphasis in building a shared fellowship is not on *who* to follow, but on *what* to follow. Sergiovanni (1996), emphasizes that Community Theory takes us to the roots of school leadership as leadership is viewed as a process of getting a group to take action that embodies the leader's purpose.

Vroom-Yetton Model

Victor Vroom and Phillip Yetton developed the Vroom-Yetton model of situational leadership in 1973. The Vroom-Yetton Decision Model indicates that every manager needs to be able to make good decisions and adapt to different challenges. The Vroom-Yetton model allows the leader to bring about consistency and order to a process that otherwise might be idiosyncratic and instinctive. The model was designed to guide the leader to identify the best decision-making approach and leadership style to take based upon a select situation. The model has the leader make decisions, designing, regulating and selecting social systems which make decisions (Pashiardis, 1993). It is understood that no single decision-making process fits all situations. It has been found

that managers are more effective and their teams are more productive and satisfied when a model is followed.

There are three important factors to consider when using the Vroom-Yetton Model. The first factor is decision quality – in making the right decision a large number of resources are needed to ensure the action taken has been thought through and of high quality. Team commitment – some decisions will have a major impact on the team; it is important to use a collaborative process which will improve the quality of the decision and a successful result will be determined. Time constraint – time sensitivity will determine the volume of people involved in the process.

The figure that follows provides the framework to the Vroom-Yetton Model. It poses seven yes/no questions which are required to be answered to determine the best decision for the situation. The model presents seven questions. As questions are read, the respondent answers yes (Y) or no (N) to work their way through a decision tree until arriving at a code (A1, A2, C1, C2 or G2). The code identifies the best decision-making process for the leader and team. Each of the codes represent the five-decision-making processes: Autocratic (A1) – use the information you already have to make the decision, without requiring any further input from your team; Autocratic (A2) – consult with the team to obtain specific information needed whereby a final decision is made; Consultative (C1) – inform the team of the situation and ask for opinions, but don't bring the group together for a discussion – you make the final decision; Consultative (C2) – the team meets for a discussion about the issue and to seek their suggestions, but you still make the final decision by yourself; Collaborative (G2) – you work with the team to reach a group consensus – your role is a facilitator as you help the team to reach

a decision that is agreed upon. The model is deemed useful for leaders who make an attempt to balance the benefits of participative management with the need to make effective decisions. The Vroom-Yetton model concludes that the principal, as the key player, must make judgements about the characteristics of the problems being faced. Successful leadership style selection is based on how the principal is able to answer the diagnostic questions accurately. The common dimension of supervision as found in all positions of leadership is in the ability to perceive desirable objectives, and to help others contribute to this vision and act in accordance with it (Pashiardis, 1993).

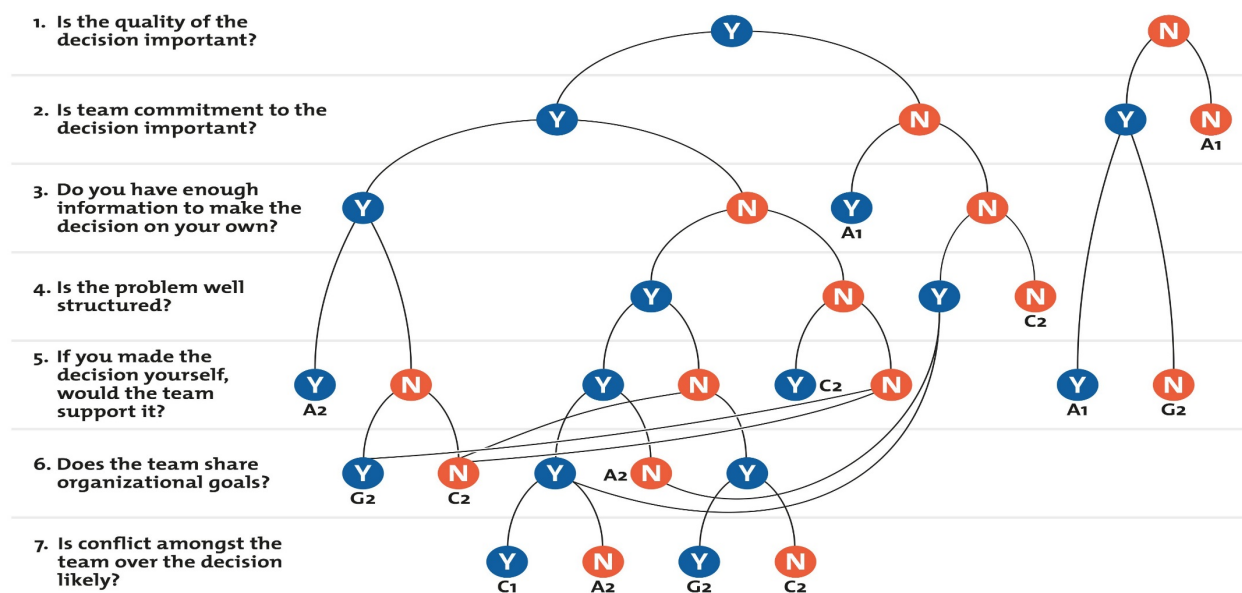


Figure 2.2 - The Vroom-Yetton Decision Tree: adapted from Leadership and Decision Making by Victor H. Vroom and Phillip W. Yetton.

Based upon the theories explored, principals are expected to take more active roles in ensuring that their staff have an opportunity to participate in decisions and actions in curriculum and instructional development and planning. Research has shown that a school's effectiveness in the promotion of student learning was found to be the

product of building wide, unified effort dependent on quality leadership. It is through effective leadership that essential personnel are pulled together for successful planning to achieve a desired goal. Therefore, the principal must know the mission to be accomplished and the best procedure available to accomplish this mission to be successful in the work (Pashiardis, 1993).

Leadership

The role of the building principal within a secondary setting has evolved into a complex organization with assignments and expectations that are often political in nature, result from a change in societal expectations and are established as a result of unclear local and State initiative and priorities.

Over time, the position has grown to encompass one having a clear understanding to the use and integration of all forms of technology to support instructional and non-instructional venues; be an advocate to support instructional staff with professional development aligned with instructional best practices to support students with diverse abilities; provide guidance to support the overall social and emotional well-being of students; identify priorities of learning and how to improve instruction through meaningful conversations with all stakeholders, inclusive of teachers, students and parents; conduct observations and model components of quality instruction; analyze and interpret data to support instructional and developmental goals; and ensure that all instructional and non-instructional stakeholders are safe.

Leadership is a phenomenon that occurs when one influences the direction people are going and unites them toward accomplishing a common goal (Stoner, 2016). Effective leadership is the linchpin of a school's success (The Association for Middle

Level Education (formally National Middle School Association, NMSA, 2010).

Leadership makes the school philosophy, mission, and vision come alive (Krajewski, 1996).

The role and expectation of the school building administrator (leader) has changed over time from manager of operations to leader of instructional accountability and best practices, advocate for students and teachers in establishing relationships and trust, coordinator of school safety and much more. Asserted by Reeves (2009), today's principal is widely expected to be both the instructional leader of the school and the administrative manager. Horng, Klasik, & Loeb (2009), reported that principals engage in over 40 different types of tasks daily, spending 30% of the day working to supervise students and scheduling; 20% of their time on organizational management dealing with personnel and school finance; and less than 10% of the day on classroom observation and professional development (as cited in Lemoine, McCormack, & Richardson, 2014). The complexity and size of school systems today are such that one leader cannot meet the demands of daily tasks and problems; thus, a singular leader-centric school cannot operate as efficiently as one in which leadership roles are distributed (Angelle, 2010).

Schein as cited in Bernato (2017), postulated that the momentum of trends like increasing technological capacity, the evolution of information technology and the web, globalization, global warming, and social responsibility are all factors that substantiate the need to form new kinds of organizational leadership. The Wallace Foundation (2011), asserted that ineffective leadership is a lack of support from superiors and subordinates (Lemoine, et al., 2014). Howard Gardner (1995) reminds us that leaders influence us most not with their words, but with their lives (Reeves, 2009).

It is common to hear complaints about the lack of leadership, poor leadership, and disappointment with those who are in leadership roles (Stoner, 2016). The leadership style of the school principal is the primary factor contributing to a successful relationship between school-based management and school improvement (Delaney, 1997). Short (2003) stated that schools where empowerment is advocated, create opportunities for teachers to develop skills and encourage risk taking and new ideas (as cited in Angelle, 2010). Great principals have the ability to know exactly what teachers and students need in order to be successful, and they often set the mood of the school (Washington, 2017). Washington (2017) insights, where there is strong leadership, there is high morale. Reeves (2009) addresses, of all the variables that influence student achievement, the two that have the most profound influences are teacher quality and leadership quality.

Cotton (2004), reports that female principals tend to be more democratic, while male principals tend to have more authoritarian styles of leadership. Cotton also reports that principals who have an elementary background, as opposed to a secondary background, tended to focus more on instructional issues and spent less time on administrative matters. Essentially, three phrases can be used to summarize the evolution of the school building leader – leader of instruction, leader of management, and collaborative leader. The link bringing such phrases together is a leader that has a clear vision. The vision must be feasible to allow it to be articulated, provide motivation and express the best interests of students and building stakeholders to support change and evolution of schooling. Chaltain (2009), asserted that a leader's job is to find the school's vision, not to create one. Leaders need to pay close attention to what is

happening in the school and then guide the staff in developing a vision that reflects the priorities and passions of those who work and learn there (Toll, 2017). Leithwood et al., (2006) explored the literature on successful school leadership and found four common core practices: setting direction; developing people; redesigning the organization; and managing the instructional (teaching and learning) program (as cited in Sanzo, Sherman, & Clayton, 2011). Advocates for middle grades education suggest that principals are critical to the implementation of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organizational structures that meet young adolescent needs (Bickmore, 2016). Courageous, collaborative leaders make a difference by putting their knowledge and beliefs into action (NMSA, 2010).

In totality, as addressed in Aguilar's (2014) article "What Makes a Great School Leader?" there are three qualities indicative of great school leaders. According to Aguilar, leaders must be visionary, establish a community and possess emotional intelligence. Aguilar, identifies that a visionary leader is clear about what he or she believes and knows what is best for children; for their academic, social, and emotional learning. As a community leader, Aguilar addresses that the leader must establish a high functioning team to establish relationships and support the vision collectively established. Finally, Aguilar emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence. Here, she states that emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and recognize, understand and manage the emotions of others. Cotton (2004) concurs with Aguilar in stating that most successful principals would be those who were visionary, transformational leaders, who focused their staff and community on continuous instructional improvement as their driving goal, and reasons for being.

Implied by Covert (2004), one of the most important attributes of an educational leader is love for learning and students – the heart of every successful principal. However, as addressed by Stoner (2016), in a recent World Economic Forum survey, 86% of the respondents reported they believe there is a leadership crisis in the world today. As cited by the National Middle School Association (NMSA, 2010), research on effective leadership and organization comprises three broad categories: (1) professional development for teachers, (2) professional learning communities among teachers, and (3) the role of the instructional leader. NMSA asserts, the intersection of these dynamic and vital areas revolves around the principal's ability to provide vision, model innovations, offer individualized support to teachers, foster open and effective communication, and to function as an instructional resource.

Effective school principals suggest that modeling excellence, establishing a team of dedicated educators, and instilling a sense of pride throughout the school community are essential ingredients establishing and sustaining a successful school culture. Ospina & Foldy as cited in Bernato (2017), postulates that leadership becomes a consequence of collaborative meaningful-making in practice; in this way, it is intrinsically tied to a collective rather than to an individual model of leadership. Gurr and Drysdale (2012), explained that The International Successful Principalship Project (ISSPP) confirmed that leadership by successful principals comprises four core dimensions of setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing the instructional program. Additionally, Gurr and Drysdale (2012) professed that practices such as strategic problem solving articulating a set of core values, building trust and being visible in the school, building a safe and secure environment, introducing productive

forms of instruction to staff, and the coalition of the building. Ideal traits of a quality leader in education consist, but are not limited to establishing strong relationships, being student centered, support teachers taking risks in the delivery of instruction and assessment of student learning, collaborate with students and building stakeholders, problem-solve, have empathy, and have a positive attitude. Byrk & Schneider, 2003; Gree, 2010; VanAlstine, 2008 as cited in Lemoine, et al (2014) asserted that effective leaders set high expectations and reinforce these expectations through daily interactions with faculty, staff, and students. Effective leaders, in addition, are responsive to the socioeconomic context of their schools and communities by implementing programs and practices that consider the population served by the school. Such leaders cultivate norms of collegiality and trust among their teachers. The Wallace Foundation, 2011 as cited in Lemoine (2014), elicits that effective instructional leaders allocate funds for materials to maximize teaching effectiveness. Additionally, they selectively apply advantageous scheduling, assignment of teachers, and recognition to achieve these ends.

Educational reform efforts have been concentrated largely on what is done to students rather than what is best for students. Schools with strong cultures are resistant to change as the teachers continue to select and retain teachers who are like minded (Madsen & Mabokela, 2014). To change and improve schools, we must engage in a mind shift that enables us to rethink the purpose and nature of teaching, learning, and schooling (Crockett, 1996). Leadership is complex and multi-dimensional and is seen to be central to improvement in student learning outcomes (Gurr & Drysdale, 2012). The demands placed upon school leaders in the current age of accountability have universally and fundamentally changed the face of modern school leadership (Sanzo, et

al., 2011). Crockett (1996), emphasizes that most importantly, successful re-culturing of American education will require leadership. Crockett (1996) raises the question, “Is the Need for Reform Real?” Crockett further mentions that our nation and world are undergoing dynamic, multifaceted change; American society is rapidly and increasingly becoming multicultural; the traditional family structure is not as predominant as it once was as there are more nonfamily households than family households; knowledge is increasing at a geometric rate; increased mobility and technological complexity affect the level and nature of human discourse; and the global economy is more interconnected and interdependent than at any time in world history. The need for change in education is timely and pressing. Senge (1990), argues what we need in education is a fundamental shift of mind that recognizes schools as cultural institutions (as cited in Crockett, 1996, p. 184). Parker (1993), stipulates this conceptual shift he addresses in thinking about education requires multidimensional leadership that involves developing strategies to facilitate learning, creating an environment that fosters motivation to learn and shaping the way students come to view learning (as cited in Crockett, 1996, p. 184). As discovered by Reeves (2009), change leaders know that they do not change organizations without changing individual behavior, and they will not change individual behavior without affirming the people behind the behavior.

According to Leithwood et al. (2006), there is not a single documented case of school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership (as cited in Sanzo et al. 2011). Middle grade literature suggests that effective principals should understand and advocate for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organizational structures that meet young adolescent developmental

needs, such as shared leadership, scheduling, and structures that promote student and teacher collaboration and real-life learning activities (Brickmore, 2016). In the table that follows, analyzes the conceptual contrast between traditional, content-oriented schooling and the teaching and learning for understanding that are characteristic of a re-cultured school with appropriate leadership capacity and ability.

Traditional Classrooms and Schools versus Re-cultured Classrooms and Schools		
	Traditional	Re-cultured
Purpose of Education	Knowledge/content. Transmission of culture.	Application of Knowledge. Inquiry into culture. Responsible citizenship.
Students	Passive learners. Work alone.	Thinkers with important information. Active learners. Collaboration
Teachers	Source of information. Managers of students. Content specialists	Facilitators of learning. Interact with students, Content, pedagogical, and learning specialists.
Curriculum	Rigid structure, based on disciplines and subjects that are separate and distinct. Content is the focus of learning. Textbooks and worksheets are integral to activities.	Flexible structure based on the connections that exist between subjects and disciplines. Concepts and generalizations are the foci of learning. Primary sources, people, and hands-on materials are part of the curriculum.
Teaching	Teacher centered. Emphasis on content and right answer. Solitary profession.	Student centered. Emphasis on inquiry, growth, and understanding. Teacher is a collaborative profession.
Learning	Passive and linear. Reliant on memory. Based on recall.	Active and nonlinear. Reliant upon construction of knowledge. Based on understanding.
Assessment	Memory tests.	Projects and demonstrations.

Table 2.2: Traditional Classrooms and Schools vs. Re-cultured Classroom and Schools (Crockett, 1996).

If we are serious about improving schools, there is a need for school leadership structures to be reconsidered and then appropriate support given to ensure we have leaders capable of transforming schools (Gurr & Drysdale, 2012). Gurr & Drysdale, (2012), asserted and shared the consistent findings over a decade from three studies are somewhat concerning. Too many people in leadership roles are not leaders, do not have an expectation of being a leader, and do not have the organizational support to be leaders. Organizational trust is the foundation for those elements necessary for successful distributed leadership; that is, collaborative, communication, joint problem solving, and honest feedback (Angelle, 2010). Leadership needs to be seen as a special quality and that the current vogue for everyone as a leader is unhelpful (Gurr & Drysdale, 2012).

In order to support the evolution of re-cultured classrooms and schools, it is imperative that school leaders support authentic learning and ensure that student learning emphasizes problem solving, decision making, creativity and critical thinking alongside with understanding, reflection, synthesizing, analyzing and evaluative opportunities to best prepare students to compete globally with respect to schooling and to be prepared for the 21st century and beyond. As stated by Midgley & Wood (1993), paying attention to the philosophies, beliefs and values that influence teachers, parents, and administrators and that guide education reform is important, because “the culture is unlikely to change unless the thinking of those constituencies change” (as cited in Crockett, 1996, p. 185). An organization where power is shared, where decisions are jointly made, and where teachers lead alongside the principal, can only occur within a climate of trust (Angelle, 2010). Furthermore, as addressed by Brickmore (2016),

principals should understand and provide for the contextual, socially constructed lives of young adolescents inherent in a pluralistic society.

According to Petzko et al., (2002), leadership at the middle school level is complex and numerous demands are placed on principals on a daily basis. Contemporary middle school leaders have a vast array of responsibilities and have been characterized as one who must be a transformational leader, the primary change agent in the school, an expert in teaching and learning, and one who can engage in collaborative leadership and decision making. Leithwood et al., (2004), stated that classroom instruction has the greatest school level impact on student achievement, leadership has the second greatest effect. Gurr et al., (2005), the principal remains an important and significant figure in determining the success of a school (as cited in Sanzo et al. 2011). Establishing a safe and secure learning environment and a positive, nurturing school climate are merely the first steps in a long series of critically high expectations effective principals set for themselves, as well as for the educational communities they lead (Cotton, 2004). The biggest thing about school-based management falls on the principal – schools need a very strong, knowledgeable principal because ultimately it is the principal who makes the final decision (Delaney, 1997). Those placed in positions of leadership require three elements for success: the desire to lead others, the skills necessary to lead others, and the opportunity to be in a position to lead (Angelle, 2010).

Principals with a shared vision where building stakeholders have a voice and are empowered, support efforts of the collaborative leadership model. Leaders that speak to being and exemplify lifelong learning as well as are active and possess an engaged role in classroom instruction are leading indicators in support of exemplary leadership

characteristics. Principals who lead with an instructional orientation and seek to manage the instructional program take into account the unique needs of every student in their schools. The work to improve student achievement by principals is done in part through an understanding of the current status of students within the school and the organizational context, developing the direction and focus of the school, and redesigning the organization to improve instruction to increase student achievement (Sanzo, et al., 2011). Furthermore, a leader must invest in personal capital which is earned and sustained through hard work, dedication and truthful conversations.

Principals must have the leadership skills to revolutionize teachers' belief systems (Madsen & Mabokela, 2014). Madsen & Mabokela (2014), emphasized that principal's energies are consumed with reshaping teachers' instructional practices and focusing on improving student expectations. Manasse (1986), identifies that successful leaders have vision and are able to connect the disparate pieces and develop a cohesive view of their schools which is an alignment of goals that can lead their organizations to success. Furthermore, Manasse (1986), states that leaders use of organizational vision allows them to take into account the system as a whole and the impact of decisions on unique components of the school (as cited in Sanzo, et al., 2011).

While a school leader has a personal vision of what the school can become, it is important to build the school's vision collaboratively around a set of core beliefs that are understood, owned, and supported by the larger school community (NMSA, 2010). Covert (2004), asserts that successful principals are those who have vision, are transformational leaders, have a focus on staff and community for continual instructional improvement as a driving goal and reason for being. Krajewski (1996), emphasizes that

principals should be the principal teacher, and their leadership should be precise parallel to good teaching: are enthusiastic facilitators; meet student needs; prepare effective lessons; understand what motivates each student; enhance learning and growth of students; prepare for effective interactions; and enhance growth of all school personnel. As per Salazar (2014), high performing leaders have a pivotal role improving student achievement. The ability to promote a positive learning culture, provide an effective instructional program, and apply best practices to student learning is the key to school success.

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards is referenced as a framework whereby the relationship between the standards and the way principals describe their work serves as a catalyst for identifying the pathway for the principal as a leader and manager. Lovely (2004), states that the standards provide the educational framework to prepare competent and successful school leaders more effectively and to chart a path for school leaders to assist them in improving student success (as cited in Muse & Abrams, 2011). According to Muse and Abrams, the ISLLC standards have become a national model of leadership standards and serve as common language of leadership expectations. According to the Council of Chief State School Officials, 2008, the ISLLC standards are comprised of six function areas that describe and define strong leadership: (a) setting a shared vision of learning; (b) developing a school culture and instructional program that supports student learning and staff professional growth; (c) ensuring effective organizational management which includes resources for safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; (d) collaborating with members of the faculty and community, responding to the diverse interests and needs of

the community, and securing community resources; (e) acting in an ethical manner with integrity and fairness; and (f) understanding, influencing, and responding to the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts (Muse & Abrams, 2011). In 2015, the next generation of standards were released. The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) were developed to replace the Instate Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. The PSEL were designed to address the new context of public education as well as recent research in studying the influence and impact of school principals on teaching and learning. As addressed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015), the PSEL standards have ten components (a) Sustain a mission, vision and core values; (b) Ethics and professional norms; (c) Equity and cultural responsiveness; (d) Curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (e) Community of care and support for students; (f) Professional capacity of school personnel; (g) Professional community for teachers and staff; (h) Meaningful engagement of families and community; (i) Operations and management; and (j) School improvement.

Principals often find it difficult to remain focused on their fundamental purpose due to the nature of their job that requires attending to multiple and varied issues and problems throughout the school day (Muse & Abrams, 2011). It is essential that a skillful leader be coherent and focused in instruction and management to work effectively, be flexible and complete obligations in an organized and system nature. McEwan (2003), asserts that instructional leaders must be knowledgeable about learning theory, effective instruction, and curriculum. McEwan (2003), further suggests that instructional leadership is directly related to the processes of instruction where teachers, learners, and the curriculum interact (as cited in Muse & Abrams, 2011). Muse &

Abrams (2011), identify good leadership requires effective management. Effective principals are also effective managers. Muse & Abrams (2011), suggest setting priorities needs to be related to the overall school vision of the leader. Principals need to make distinctions about what is more important and what is less important and decide what gets done at various points in time. Principals must think about what matters most, what makes sense to prioritize, and always consider that work in education is ongoing with constant changes and choices.

Middle School Concept

William M. Alexander, regarded as the Father of the Middle School (Hodge, 1978). Pace's (1996) article, William M. Alexander, 84, Dies; Fostered Idea of Middle Schools, addressed that Alexander as an educator was a leader in the movement to supplant conventional junior high schools with middle schools that provide young adolescents with a smaller and more intimate educational environment. Furthermore, it was stated that Alexander was convinced in the early 1960's that most conventional junior high schools had become static, being modeled on programs at senior high schools.

One of Alexander's reason for the junior high school be changed to a middle school was based upon the design of the middle school to be more responsive to the needs and interests of young adolescents (Pace, 1996). According to J.L. Hodge (1978), Alexander believed that curriculum development should be a deliberate process by which teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of their classrooms. Alexander proposed that the middle school bridged the gap between elementary and high school, and brought continuity to the education program. The major components of the middle

school included a comprehensive curriculum plan, a home-base advisory class, team planning and team teaching, a variety of instructional plans, exploratory courses, health and physical education programs aimed at adolescents, and planning and evaluation systems for teachers (Hodge, 1978). By sharing ideas, knowledge, and personal challenges and successes in the classroom, offering specific feedback on instruction, and working to understand the needs and experiences of students, teachers can maximize their talents and establish an individualized and appropriate learning environment in which young adolescents are challenged academically and can achieve success (Cook & Faulkner, 2010).

The change from k-8 schools followed by four-year secondary schools emerged in the late 1800's. In the early 1900's the concept of junior high school (including grades seven and eight and in some instances, grade nine) was born. In the early 1960's, middle schools for grades six, seven, and eight gained popularity (Nussbaum, 2004).

According to Alexander in *The Junior High School: A Changing View* (1995), he explains the importance of need for a bridge between the self-contained classroom of the elementary school with its broad and flexible units of work and the departmentalized program of the high school with its relatively greater emphasis on subjects and specialization. The junior high school has typically been a secondary school following the 4-year high school model rather than being an in-between school, bridging the gap between elementary and secondary education (Alexander, 1995). Alexander, addressed Characteristics of the Junior High School, in that:

- The junior high school has sought to be a transitional or bridge institution between the elementary and the high school;
- Composite of efforts to have a program of its own especially adopted to the needs of preadolescent and early adolescent pupils;

- Program of exploratory experiences;
- Continued general education.

Several factors point to the need for a vigorous attempt in the middle school to focus on the individualization of instruction. Although the primary school pays attention to individual differences, its program is most of all one of integration of young children into accepted patterns of communication and social behavior (Alexander, 1995). Rockoff and Lockwood (2010), referenced statistical data between 1970 and 2000, the number of public middle schools in the U.S. grew more than sevenfold, from over 1,500 to 11,500. These new middle schools displaced both traditional k-8 primary schools and junior high schools (which first appeared a century ago and served grades 7-8 and 7-9). From 1987 to 2007, the percentage of public school 6th graders in k-6 schools fell from roughly 45 percent to 20 percent. As depicted by Rockoff and Lockwood (2010), bolstering middle school reform: in the specific year when students move to a middle school (or junior high school), their academic achievement, as measured by standardized tests, fall substantially in both math and English relative to that of their counterparts who continue to attend a k-8 elementary school. Furthermore, they substantiate that student achievement continues to decline throughout middle school. This negative effect persists at least through 8th grade.

Drawing upon the work of Alexander and McEwin (1982), researchers noted that middle level practices could not be infused if teachers did not know how to implement them. Equally compelling, Arth (1985), suggested that the middle school movement could not be sustained without teachers who understood middle level students and the purpose of middle school education. Furthermore, Nussbaum (2004), professed that educators feel the middle school is an idea whose time has passed. Nussbaum further

states that many administrators believe that students do not always do well with change and by keeping students in the same building they will not have to cope with a new environment and all of the new faces in faculty and staff; whereas, a K-8 school, provides the same neighborhood, building and staff for parents and students alike. Faulkner and Cook (2006), discovered that middle grades teachers reported that their abilities to enact best middle level practices were hindered by mandated tests (as cited in Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 14).

Beane (1999) in his article *Middle Schools Under Siege*, analyzed theories underpinning the middle school concept and found conceptual problems. He argued that middle level educators and researchers needed to look at their data on middle schools more carefully and rejected accusations of middle school failure. He urged educators and researchers to differentiate between middle schools with highly implemented middle school concepts and those that tinkered at the edges (as cited in Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 10). States and school districts across the country are reevaluating the practice of educating young adolescents in stand-alone middle schools, typically spanning grades 6 through 8 or 5 through 8, rather than keeping them in k-8 schools (Rockoff & Lockwood, 2010). Jackson & Tyson (2009), postulated that middle schools always valued critical thinking, literacy, problem solving, collaborative learning, character development, and relevant, responsive curricula, became fused with the language of what research said was needed for learners in an increasingly global society (as cited in Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 11).

Jackson & Davis (2000) and NMSA (2003) concur that advocates for middle schools identify the following tenets as essential for the appropriate education of young

adolescents: a rigorous, standards-based, and relevant curriculum, instruction characterized by diverse and differentiated methods, staff well versed in developmental characteristics of early adolescence, organizational structures that foster the development of positive student-teacher relationships, and community and family involvement (as cited in Parker, 2009). Research suggests that adherence to and implementation of an integrated middle school reform model comprising these guiding principles is associated with gains in academic achievement and socio-emotional development (Parker, 2009).

Dr. William Alexander's vision as recorded in his educational belief statement "... Intellectual growth means much more than an increasing competence in the academic content of the curriculum. We must endeavor to stimulate in the child a love of learning, an attitude of inquiry, a passion for truth and beauty, a questioning mind. The learning of right answers is not enough Beyond answers alone, we must help children ask the right questions, and discover their answers through creative thinking, reasoning, judging, and understanding" (NMSA, 2010 pgs. 3-4), clearly defies educating the middle school student.

Understanding the Middle Level Child

Jackson & David (2000), identified that the foundation of effective middle level schools is supported by three pillars: academic excellence, social equity, and developmental responsiveness. Jackson & David (2000), further suggested that high performing middle schools effectively operate with a democratic system of governance that includes opportunities for collaboration and shared decision making by all stakeholders, either directly or through representation, as recommended in Turning

Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in the 21st Century (as cited in Friend et al., 2010).

NMSA, 2010 posited that a successful school for young adolescents is an inviting, supportive, and safe place that promotes in-depth learning and enhances student's physical and emotional well-being. In such a school, human relationships are paramount (as cited in Kiefer & Ellerbrock, 2010).

During the middle school years, when students are between ten and fifteen years in age, students undergo great transition in identifying oneself, developing a sense of belonging, having a desire to be accepted, have social and emotional as well as psychological changes and develop physically, intellectually and morally. The academic growth and personal development experienced during these important years significantly impact their futures. In the middle grades, the stage will be set for success in high school and beyond, or for disengagement and the likelihood of becoming a high school dropout (NMSA, 2010). NMSA (2010) postulates that educators in developmentally responsive middle grade schools construct curriculum that not only provide clear, complete, and objective information, but actively assist young people in formulating positive moral principles.

NMSA (2010), addressed that each young adolescent is a living work in progress with growth along the road to maturity occurring at different times and rates. As a result, designing middle grade programs on the assumption that every student is ready to master specific concepts or content at precisely the same time is unrealistic and counterproductive. Furthermore, NMSA emphasizes that middle grade educators enjoy being with young adolescents, and understand the dynamics of the ever-changing youth culture. Such educators value interdisciplinary studies and integrative learning and

make sound pedagogical, research-based decisions reflective to the needs, interests, and special abilities of students. They are sensitive to individual differences and varied learning styles, respond positively to the many dimensions of diversity students present, and are effective in involving families in the education of their children.

While many students make a smooth transition into middle school, those young adolescents who have difficulty may experience academic, motivational, and emotional declines (Parker, 2009). Such declines as Parker addresses may lead to negative long-term outcomes, including dropping out of school, drug abuse, and delinquency.

Shavelson & Bolus (1982), identified that self-concept is defined as the total picture of how one perceives him or herself and is influenced by self-assessments, contextual experiences, and the perceptions of others, including parents, teachers, and peers. Barber & Olsen, 2004; Osterman, 2000; and Wampler, 2002 followed by addressing that a child's self-concept may influence academic achievement, which typically declines across the transition to middle school (as cited in Parker, 2009).

Teaming and advisory concepts as implemented in the middle level construct helped change the public perception of schools. As a result, middle schools became viewed as more nurturing for students who were in the developmental stage of early adolescents. Teaming and advisory made schools more responsive to students' social and developmental needs, but academic benefits were also evident (Friend et al., 2010). Parker (2009), addressed that instructional strategies as cooperative learning, service learning, and differentiated instruction are necessary for meeting young adolescents' diverse academic and social needs. She further addressed, interdisciplinary teams are recommended as structures that foster positive teacher-student relationships. These

teams should include a small number of students and teachers, common team planning time, and individual planning blocks.

Keifer & Ellerbrock (2010), postulated that the development of healthy student-student relationships and positive perceptions of the peer world can be supported by creating and sustaining a more personalized school environment in which students feel cared for and connected. It is suggested for this to occur, educators need to understand students' peer world and the social norms, values, and behaviors that young adolescents may share with their peers. Additionally, they must consciously implement developmentally responsive school structures that allow for positive student-teacher and student-student relationships to thrive.

Advisory Construct

In advisory, teachers are encouraged to engage students in considering their own feelings about choices and consequences of their actions on themselves and others (Schaefer et al., 2016). Middle level advisors are typically faculty members with the desire to develop meaningful relationships and to facilitate conversations with groups of students on a regular basis. Discussion while in advisory typically focuses on students' academic, personal, and social concerns (Niska, 2013).

Spear (2005), suggests that advisory is built on the notion that every young adolescent should have at least one caring adult at school to act as mentor or advisor. NMSA (2010), emphasizes that each student must have one adult in the school who assumes special responsibility for supporting the student's academic and personal development. This adult is a model of good character who is knowledgeable about the development of young adolescents, enjoys working with them, and easily comes to

know students well as individuals. Such advisors are not counselors, but they listen to and guide youth through the ups and downs of school life.

Wood and Hillman (1992), explained that advisory was created in response to middle grade students' unique social and emotional issues. Sparks and Rye (1990), explained that advisory built and strengthened teacher-student relationships (as cited in Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 9). An advisory program helps students develop respect for self and others; compassion; a workable set of values; and the skills of cooperation, decision making; and goal setting (NMSA, 2010). Cameli (2017), articulated that the goal to the advisory concept was to provide support in functioning as a home base in school where students developed relationships and community building was instilled, incorporated study skills, goal setting, critical thinking and career-readiness simulations.

Advisory has been an important part of the middle level concept since its inception. Advisory in practice has been unsuccessful. In 2001, only 48% of middle level schools reported having an advisory program in place. While this is a gain of 8% from 1988, it is evident from the data that the majority of middle schools have failed to implement advisory (Spear, 2005). The potential reason for the lack to the implementation of the advisory concept is as a result to instructional focus on testing and in taking away from time devoted to academic preparation. Educators however have identified that the advisory concept is the bridge linking the academic curriculum with affective social and emotional development leading to improved student learning. Spear (2005), addressed that through the advisory concept, concerns for humanity come together in ways that bring relevance, realism and reasons to the lives of young adolescents. He further identified, areas such as appreciation of divergent thinking,

concern for personal and emotional safety, and risk taking are dealt with and related to powerful learning in classrooms as well as throughout the school.

The structure of an advisory program varies based upon perspective and intent. Generally, advisory programs involve one teacher and a group of about fifteen or less students that meet regularly (daily or once a week) to provide encouragement and support. The advisor becomes the students advocate and serves as a liaison with parents. Abundant practice and research studies indicate that when students are known well by other students and by caring adults in a school, they will be better behaved, care more about others, and have a more positive attitude about their school and their work; and their achievement will increase (Spear, 2005).

Effective middle level leaders know that while implementing the advisory concept cannot solve all issues, it can have a positive impact. Schools that embrace an advisory vision impact student learning as they help young adolescents deal with the challenges that life presents (Spear, 2005). In *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*, National Middle School Association (2010) – academic success and personal growth increase markedly when young adolescents' affective needs are met.

Forte and Schurr (1993), addressed common characteristics to be considered when planning learning experiences for middle level students:

1. Young adolescents have unique interests and various abilities; they need opportunities to express their creativity;
2. Young adolescents identify with their peers and want to belong to the group; they must be given the opportunity to form positive relationships;

3. Young adolescents reflect a willingness to learn new things they consider useful; therefore, they require occasions to use skills to solve real-life problems;
4. Young adolescents are curious about their world. They need varied situations to explore and extend knowledge;
5. Young adolescents experience rapid and sporadic physical development. They require a variety of activities and time to be themselves;
6. Young adolescents are self-conscious and susceptible to feelings of low self-esteem. They need opportunities for success and recognition;
7. Young adolescents are at a time in their lives when they need adults but don't want to admit it. They need caring adult role models and advisors who like and respect them;
8. Young adolescents want to make their own decisions. They need consistency and direction;
9. Young adolescents prefer active to passive learning activities. They need hands-on and cooperative learning experiences;
10. Young adolescents are idealistic and possess a strong sense of fairness; therefore, they require situations appropriate for sharing thoughts, feelings, and attitudes.

(as cited in Spear, 2005).

Spear (2005), addresses that advisory programs over the years have failed as a result to:

- Not sufficiently focused on specific goals and learnings;
- Lack sufficient support from the staff or district office;
- The plan and organization are insufficient;

- The groups don't meet often enough for the relationships to develop sufficiently to fulfill some program goals;
- They have insufficient leadership and supervision from the administration;
- They rely too much on a pre-packaged curriculum;
- Lack resources and materials;
- Lack initial or ongoing professional development.

Research indicates (Spear, 2005), when students and advisors meet in advisory groups as compared to students who are not part of an advisory, the following positive influences are indicated. Students have lower ratings of school and academic daily stresses and social and peer daily stress; students have lower reports of depression, anxiety, and behavior problems; students have higher reports of academic efficacy, using distraction and refocusing coping practices, and using problem-solving coping practices; and teachers have higher ratings on overall positive school work climate, staff commitment, personal commitment to the middle school concept, and higher satisfaction with respect to intrinsic rewards, student behavior and parent and community support and involvement.

It is indicated that the concept of advisory can help to maintain a positive and supportive climate that is threatened by excessive testing and sanctions. With so many negative influences impinging on the lives of young adolescents outside of school, it is important that every child be a part of a group where real concerns and issues are addressed.

Teaming

The development of the middle level concept in the late 1960s highlights the importance of interdisciplinary teams in middle grade schools (Cook & Faulkner, 2010). Teaming, is the organization in which two or more teachers share the responsibility for instruction, curriculum, and evaluation of a common group of students for one or more years (Boyer & Bishop, 2004). Knowles & Brown, (2000); Arnold & Stevenson, (1998) addressed further that teaming is characterized by adjacent classrooms or shared team space, common planning time and common blocks of time (as cited in Boyer & Bishop, 2004). As stated by Mertens & Flowers (2004), an interdisciplinary team is comprised of a group of teachers from different subject areas who teach the same group of students, creating a small unit within a larger school (as cited in Haverback & Mee, 2013). George & Alexander (1993), indicated that early advocates proposed that a team of teachers working together with the same students could create a safe and caring school environment, one in which students and teachers could collaborate (as cited in Strahan & Hedt, 2009). Friend & Thompson (2010), suggested that teaming is a necessary component in order to meet the needs of young adolescents and to achieve academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, and social equity.

As stated by George & Alexander (2003), using this component of the middle school concept helps establish a more student-centered educational experience and fosters a collaborative and supportive environment in which students can be successful (as cited in Cook & Faulkner, 2010). While teaming clearly promotes positive student-teacher relationships and allows teachers to know their students well, it is suggested such structures can also help promote positive student-student relationships and mitigate

some of the negative trends observed in young adolescents' perceptions of the peer world (Kiefer & Ellerbrock, 2010).

The structure of teaming allows for the teachers on each team to know given students well and follow their progress throughout the school year. Teaming, a research based practice of the middle school movement emerged as its most critical component. Research confirmed that teaming positively impacted students' academic success (Schaefer et al., 2016). Through teaming, students feel most positive regarding their academic growth and supportive in creation of social relationships with their peers and teachers. As an outgrowth to teaming, greater instructional attempts of developing interdisciplinary lessons was established.

The position statement of the National Middle Schools Association (NMSA), *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), notes that interdisciplinary teaming and common planning time are essential elements of organizational structure at the middle grade level. The statement maintains that effective middle schools need grade level teams of teachers who have clearly delineated time to discuss student needs and issues. NMSA (2010), calls for schools that promote purposeful and meaningful learning and maintains that a school's organization, which includes interdisciplinary teams and common planning time, has a significant impact on student achievement (Haverback & Mee, 2013). Effective middle grade schools develop structures that ensure students will be known as individuals and feel cared for and valued. Instructional teams are essential to the process of creating learning communities. Strahan & Hedt (2009), posited in the team environment, teachers are invited to seek ways to make learning more invitational, interactive, and relevant. The

team is a home away from home – the place where students work and learn together with teachers and classmates with whom they identify. When schools implement interdisciplinary teaming, students and teachers attitudes and the overall school environment become increasingly positive (NMSA, 2010).

Jackson & Davis (2000), found that teaming creates small learning communities and allows supportive relationships among students to form and thrive (as cited in Kiefer & Ellerbrock, 2010). Kain (2001), noted that the nature of conversations among teachers in teams shaped professional relationships. Furthermore, Kain indicated that in the most successful professional learning community, teachers focused conversations more on teaching than on troubles with students; took time to discuss core areas of their work with emphasis on assessment and technology; worked together to create curriculum; and shared professional literature and resources (as cited in Strahan & Hedt, 2009). Based on the work of Wallace in 2007 he professed that interdisciplinary teaming, when properly implemented, allows teachers and students to work closely together on a daily basis, providing opportunities for middle school students to bond socially with their peers, their teachers, and their school as a whole (as cited in Kiefer & Ellerbrock, 2010).

McEwin (1997), proclaims that teaming in middle schools has increased significantly in the past 30 years, from 8 % in 1968, to 33 % in 1988, to 59 % in 1993. McEwin, Dickerson & Jenkins (2003), addressed that teaming increased to 77 % in 2001. Dickerson & Erb (1997), identified that teaming was poorly organized and implemented. Arnold & Stevenson (1998), professed that even when structures and

supports for teaming are in place, it is teacher determination and strong vision that are critical to sustaining and building effective teams (as cited in Boyer & Bishop, 2004).

NMSA (2010), states that This We Believe characterizes the role of teaming as the team is the foundation for a strong learning community characterized by a sense of family. Students and teachers on the team become well acquainted, feel safe, respected, and supported, and are encouraged to take intellectual risks (as cited in Kiefer & Ellerbrock, 2010).

Common Planning

Common planning is often defined as the time that is scheduled during the day for multiple teachers (or teams of teachers) to work collaboratively to best support the instruction of targeted curriculum, improve lesson quality, effectiveness of instruction and support student achievement. However, research indicates by Thompson, Franz, & Miller (2009) that many schools struggle with this component as there is a lack of teacher buy-in and principal leadership (as cited in Haverback & Mee, 2013). The common thread between vision and mission and clearly defined goals for common planning time is positive, effective building level leadership where administration develops a collegial, supportive climate in which high expectations, trust, and professionalism are the norm. Additionally, as indicated by Haverback & Mee (2013), in today's complex educational sphere, teachers spend much of their already limited time complying with federal and state regulations, such as State Standards, and attending to individual student supports; therefore, Common Planning Time (CPT) may be cut short. For common planning time to be effective, there must be a commitment to its success at all levels of the school organization – teachers, building level administrators,

and central office personnel. Common planning time should have a clearly defined purpose and expectations for how the time will be used. Two common causes for the ineffective use of common planning time are (1) the lack of a clearly defined purpose or agenda, and (2) an effort to accomplish too many varied tasks within the scope of the time allocated (Cook & Faulkner, 2010).

The intended outcomes as addressed through the *Great Schools Partnership* (The Glossary of Education Reform) of incorporating common planning for teachers results in:

1. The improved coordination and communication that occurs among teachers who meet and talk regularly;
2. The learning, insights, and constructive feedback that occur during professional discussions among teachers;
3. The lessons, units, materials, and resources that are created or improved when teachers work on them collaboratively.

Haverback & Mee (2013), addressed in their study that there are three primary benefits of Common Planning Time (CPT) for teachers:

1. Open lines of communication with their team leaders;
2. Ability to work with others;
3. High expectations for student achievement.

Haverback and Mee (2013) found that the most common barrier to common planning time was that teachers believed they did not have enough time to achieve their goals.

The common planning period block of time varies from one instructional organization to the next. Some uses defined by schools consist of discussion of student

work, sharing student data, professional literature, curriculum development and more. Linked to the concept of common planning are professional learning communities where teachers meet, share, collaborate instructional skills and teaming where groups of core teachers are paired with a select population of students to support social, emotional and academic needs of students.

As presented in *Great Schools Partnership*, while the common planning time concept is not typically an object of debate, skeptics may question whether the time will actually have a positive impact on student learning, whether teachers will use the time purposefully and productively, or whether students would be better served if teachers spent more of their own time teaching. It is further implied by *Great Schools Partnership* from a research perspective, to attribute gains in student performance to any one influence in a school, the benefit of common planning time may be difficult to measure objectively and reliably. They further imply that the quality of the design and execution will determine the results achieved. While anecdotal reports indicate that many middle school educators believe in its value, research on common planning time is scant (Haverback & Mee, 2013).

Haverback & Mee (2013) found that middle school students have endorsed the impact of Common Planning Time on school climate. Warren & Muth (1995) conducted a study of 494 eighth-grade students and reported that students on teams with teachers who participated in common planning time were significantly more satisfied with school than those with teachers who did not participate in common planning time. Specifically, students whose teachers used CPT reported more positive reactions to teachers and higher opinions of school climate (as cited in Haverback & Mee, 2013).

In another study Flowers, Mertends, & Mulhall (1999), revealed that teachers who had more time to collaborate during high levels of CPT reported greater job satisfaction, more parental interaction, and a larger number of advisory groups that were teacher led when compared to teachers with lower levels of CPT. Students also benefitted in social and emotional ways from teachers who had more time to collaborate (as cited in Haverback & Mee, 2013).

Cook & Faulkner (2010), postulated through their research, in exploring the impact on students and teachers, interdisciplinary teams with common planning time (1) provided a greater opportunity for students to be better known by their teachers, (2) led to higher overall self-concepts, increased self-esteem, and more positive perceptions of school climate, (3) produced lower levels of depression and fewer behavior problems, (4) Led to higher levels of student achievement (5) reported higher levels of job satisfaction, (6) experienced more positive interaction and heightened collegiality with their teammates, and (7) incorporated higher levels of interdisciplinary team and classroom instructional practices.

In *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), The NMSA stated “The interdisciplinary team of two or more teachers working with a common group of students in a block of time is the signature component of high-performing schools, literally the heart of the school.” However, for the interdisciplinary team to function effectively, “Daily or regular common planning time is essential so that teams can plan ways to integrate the curriculum, analyze test data, review student work, discuss current research, and reflect on the effectiveness of instructional approaches” (as cited in Cook & Faulkner, 2010, p.32).

Social and Emotional Learning

As stated by Elias et al., (1997), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is known as the process through which children and adults develop the skills, attitudes and values necessary to acquire social and emotional competence (as cited in Taylor & Larson, 1999). Rutter (1987), alludes that entry into middle school is a trajectory – changing event in representing a convergence of biological, personal, social, familial, and cultural developments. Rutter (1980), addressed that the problems that surface in high school often have their roots in middle school (as cited in Elias, 2001). Acquiring knowledge is an essential goal of education, but it's not everything. Other skills and competencies support and enhance an education and they, too have real value. The No Child Left Behind era brought this message home for many educators (Ferguson, 2016). It is further addressed that teachers need to provide instructional activities that will foster student's abilities to understand, manage, and express their feelings.

Howard Gardner (1997), addressed the skills and aptitudes of social and emotional learning as inter and intrapersonal intelligence (two of his eight intelligences, inclusive to linguistics, logical mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, musical and naturalistic intelligence). He professed that in relation to interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences, social and emotional learning starts from and builds on students innate ability to understand themselves and others (Taylor & Larson, 1999).

Elias et al., (1997), states without social and emotional competence, students lack the skills to manage life tasks such as working cooperatively, solving everyday problems and controlling impulsive behavior. Kohn (1996) and Glasser (1997), further analyzed that attendance and motivation of students is affected by social and emotional

learning. By creating a safe and nurturing environment, teachers encourage children to want to come to school (as cited in Taylor & Larson, 1999).

The theory of emotional intelligence directs our attention to certain developmental strengths, or assets, that schooling should encourage in students. These are the A, B, and 3C's: Appreciation, Belonging, Confidence and Competencies, and Contributions (Elias, 2001). Elias (2001), alludes that schools must be places where accomplishments are celebrated and every child has something for which he or she feels appreciated. Furthermore, Elias notes that teens are looking for places where they have a role or a purpose; where they can find positive peer relationships with others who have similar interests or abilities; and where they can learn things. They want to have inspiring leadership, and feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

Social-emotional learning has made its way into the newly authorized Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA doesn't use the phrase social-emotional learning, but the law lets states and local districts define student success more broadly. The law specifies nonacademic factors can be used for accountability inclusive to indicators for student engagement, school climate and safety (Ferguson, 2016). Ferguson, further postulates that ESSA encourages schools to establish learning environments and enhance students effective learning skills that are essential for school readiness and academic success. Ferguson, emphasizes that ESSA recommends activities to support safe and healthy students inclusive to fostering safe, healthy, supportive and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement, helping to prevent bullying and harassment, improve instructional practices for developing relationship-building skills, such as effective communication, provide mentoring and school counseling to

students and the implementation of schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports.

Taylor & Larson (1999), asserted that teachers are under ever-increasing public and professional pressure to raise student scores on state and national tests – measurements that all but ignore social and emotional capacity and so they are hard pressed to find time to teach for student development of social and emotional competency. A frustrated student cries out “I can’t do it.” A teacher redirects: “You can’t do it, yet.” This may be the simplest way to define growth mindset, learning approach in which k12 leaders affirm students and staff a capacity to boost confidence and intelligence (Zalaznick, 2018).

Many K12 leaders say school climates improve and become more supportive when adults adopt a growth mindset and guide students to think more optimistically. It is suggested that if students take an active role in communicating what they want to do, they have a more positive attitude about learning. Educators have rethought how they ask questions during class discussion – frame questions that are more inviting as opposed to setting students up for the wrong answer (Zalaznick, 2018). According to Zalaznick, before you can get a kid to excel, you have to make sure they know you care – show you are willing to work for them and they will work for you. Furthermore, Zalaznick shares instructionally, teachers must engage students in productive struggle in giving them assignments that while challenging, will also give them a sense of accomplishment.

Elias et al., (1997), addressed that instructional goals of SEL can be divided into three domains: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral. Elias et al., (1997), professes that

the primary goal of the emotional domain is for students to learn how to express and manage their feelings appropriately. He states that the emphasis of the cognitive domain is on students developing the ability to problem solve, set goals and cooperate. In the behavioral domain students build the interpersonal skills necessary for self-management and positive social interaction. Through participation in the SEL curriculum, middle school students learn strategies for sustaining attention, verbalizing thoughts and feelings, creating alternative interpersonal actions, developing consciousness of others perspectives, and weighing consequences (as cited in Taylor & Larson, 1999).

Based on the work of Manning (1993), social and emotional characteristics unique to early adolescence include making friends, developing social interaction skills, and conducting thorough self-analysis. Early adolescents begin to develop opposite sex friends, seek independence from adult authority, resist the influence of parents and teachers, turn to peer groups as the key source of behavioral norms and examine all aspects of self-development. Manning further states to help early adolescents meet their developmental needs, middle school teachers must provide instructional opportunities for students to work in groups, develop same and opposite sex relationships, appreciate diversity and examine the pressure to conform. (as cited in Taylor & Larson, 1999).

The authors of *Turning Points 2000* (Jackson & Davis, 2000), recommend that middle level schools be staffed by teachers who are experienced in working with adolescents and prepared to create safe and healthy schools in which students are active participants and contributors (as cited in Elias, 2001). Elias (2001), identifies the fact that the transition to middle school marks a time of increased referral to mental health services. Rutter (1980), postulates that rates of smoking, alcohol, drugs, and violence

that appear to peak in high school really have their start in the middle school (as cited in Elias, 2001). Elias (2001) discovered that girls suffer particular damage to self-esteem and seem to lose interest and confidence in math and science related subject areas and careers, often due to social pressures during the middle level school years.

There are many distinct challenges that adolescents face. Elias (2001), states that virtually, every adolescent is looking for answers to the following questions: “How can I understand who I am now and who I will be in the future? How can I nurture and build positive relationships? How can I develop skills to handle everyday challenges, problems, decisions, and choices? How can I become a moral, ethical, active, committed human being? How can I develop a positive, constructive identity?” Elias further postulates that adolescents rarely verbalize these questions and sometimes their behavior seems to contradict their search for answers. It is further emphasized by Elias that educators must understand that teens’ behavior revolves around the answers to these identity questions and they will participate in school to the extent to which they perceive their school experiences relate to these questions.

According to Ferguson (2016), whether schools can teach students social-emotional skills remains to be seen. Ferguson postulates many educators and policy makers feel new college and career ready standards are an important step in that direction as they require students to engage in a more complex and rigorous kind of learning. Ferguson states that expanded learning opportunities and multiple pathways also are giving students a chance to develop a wider range of skills and competencies in and out of school.

School Organizational Structures

According to the U.S. Department of Education *Organization of U.S. Education: The School Level*, primary schools are called elementary schools, intermediate (upper primary or lower secondary) schools are called middle schools, and secondary schools are called high schools. Primary or elementary education ranges from grades 1 to grade 4-7, depending on state and school district policy. Middle schools serve pre-adolescent and young adolescent students between grades 5 and 9, with most in grade 6-8 range. Middle schools in the upper grade range (7-9) are sometimes referred to as junior high schools. Secondary or high schools enroll students in the upper grades, generally 9-12 with slight variation.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in the fall of 2017 almost 35.6 million students attended public elementary schools. Students in primary school are presented with curriculum to support basic academic learning and socialization development. Under No Child Left Behind, elementary schools developed a clear mission of getting students ready to learn. Specifically, this means developing and improving student proficiency in reading, mathematics, and science (Kay, 2009). After primary school, students proceed to either middle school or junior high school where they move from class to class each period, with a new teacher and new mixture of students in every class.

Although grade transitions may be difficult at any age, researchers hypothesize that the transition to middle school is particularly challenging, due to the timing of the transition with the onset of adolescence, a developmental mismatch between young

adolescents' needs and the middle school environment, or the shifting motivational orientations of the middle school classrooms (Parker, 2009).

Until the early 20th century, US schools were mainly k-8 models. By the mid-century, the response to growing enrollments, many places created junior highs which typically started in grade seven and served grades seven through eight or seven through nine. As cited on the National Center for Education Statistics website, school districts began moving away from the junior high model in the 1960's and rapidly toward the creation of middle schools starting in grade six or even grade five. These schools either replaced junior highs or were created where there were still k-8 schools. In 1970-71, there were 2,100 middle schools. By 1998-99 school year, there were 11,200 in increase of more than 430 percent. During the same period, the number of junior high schools declined by nearly 54 percent, from 7,800 in 1970-71 to 3,600 in 1998-99 (Tamer, 2012).

The question may be asked "What is the best configuration for k-12 schooling?" Seller (2004), stated that configuring schools by grade is a practice influenced by history, psychology, sociology, and pedagogy (as cited in Anfara & Bubbler, 2005). Offenber (2001), found that school districts' motivation to change grade configurations at the middle school level is fueled in part by research showing the k-8 model as having a beneficial effect. He shared that in Philadelphia, a district study found eighth graders in a k-8 school scored significantly higher than those in middle schools on standardized achievement tests, even after controlling poverty and race. Furthermore, Tucker & Andrada (1997), conducted a study and reported that in Connecticut, that sixth graders at k-8 and k-6 schools made greater gains on the state achievement test than sixth grade

students moving to a middle school (as cited in Abella, 2005). Holas & Huston (2012), identified that the explanation centers around the differences in instructional qualities and other characteristics of elementary and middle schools as well as the timing of this major life course transition during a developmentally fragile period.

Tamer (2005), conducted a study and reported that Florida students who entered middle school in sixth grade were 1.4 percentage points more likely than their k-8 peers to drop out of high school by 10th grade. Tamer, indicated that students who left elementary schools for middle schools in grades six or seven loose ground in both reading and math compared to their peers who attend k-8 schools. Tamer, further postulated that if you look at international comparisons, kids in the United States perform better at elementary school than the later grades.

In 1999, Alspaugh revealed that some researchers have found that there is detrimental effects on student performance when students make a transition from one school to the next, regardless of grade level (as cited by Abella, 2005). Holas & Huston (2012), identified that a potential factor for the digressive nature in middle school is that youth in middle school are often taught by teachers who feel less efficacious, caring, and trusting than teachers in elementary school and that middle schools are typically larger than k-8 or k-5 schools, and students are pooled from broader geographical areas, tend to be more ethnically and economically heterogeneous.

Abella (2005), identified that educators and researchers also believe that the beneficial effects of k-8 schools can be attributed to smaller student populations at the schools and to staff being more familiar with students and their parents, as compared to traditional middle schools. Pardini (2002), reported that districts with k-8 centers

indicate that such structures can help to improve student performance in the areas of academic achievement, attendance, and discipline. In a Boston Globe article (January 27, 2007), identified “middle schools were conceived in the 1970’s and 80’s as a nurturing bridge from early elementary grades to high school, but critics say they now more often resemble a swamp, where urban youth sink into educational failure (Tamer, 2012).

The junior high school appeared at the turn of the twentieth century and with grades seven, eight, and nine brought the 6-3-3 grade configuration (grades 1-6, 7-9, and 10-12) to the education scene (Anfara & Bubbler, 2005). George and Alexander (1993), illustrated that the junior high school emerged to satisfy the need for a richer curriculum than the elementary school was able to offer and to provide a more personal atmosphere than the high school was able to develop (as cited in Anfara & Bubbler, 2005). From its beginnings, the junior high school has sought to be a transitional or bridge institution between the elementary and the high school (Alexander, 1995). It is further suggested by Alexander (1995), that the junior high school must establish a program of its own adopted to the needs of preadolescents and early adolescent pupils. Additionally, Alexander suggested that the junior high school provides students with exploratory opportunities in learning. In the 1960’s, many questions surfaced about the effectiveness of the junior high school and the nation embraced the idea of creating middle schools, traditionally configured with grades six through eight. Since the 1960’s, the number of junior high schools declined, signaling a conceptual change away from the junior high as a preparation for high school and toward the middle school as a child-

centered institution that afforded the opportunity for team teaching, integrated curriculum, advisory programs, and flexible scheduling (Anfara & Bubbler, 2005).

Alexander (1995), suggested that the middle school gave more emphasis to independent study and activity as an aid to the transition from childhood to adolescence. To help in individualization, the middle school needs to provide adequate diagnostic and guidance services. It also needs to permit teachers to work individually with children and their parents (Alexander, 1995). Nussbaum (2004), proclaimed that some educators believe that by placing students in grades six, seven, and eight (ages 11 through 14) together in the same building is a “prescription for problems,” while others see it as a unique time of life and one that is essential so that these students are given their own learning environment. Shimniok & Schmoker (1992), professed that the middle school notion looks backward to the benefits of the safer, more communal environment of grade school. Middle school classes are centered around themes linking subjects together as dissimilar to the elementary construct of a generalized approach and where high school is more segregated. The junior high ethos is forward looking, toward school as series business.

The biggest shift in k-12 education is the transition from elementary school to middle school (Wolpert-Gawron, 2017). The primary school pays attention to individual differences, its program is most of all one of integration of young children into accepted patterns of communication and social behavior (Alexander, 1995). As students’ progress through their educational journey from elementary to secondary school, students transition from having one to multiple teachers, receive an education in a larger and more active learning environment, potentially more students in secondary as

opposed to elementary classes and a different format for the implementation to the delivery of lessons and the assessment of student learning. Wolpert-Gawron (2017), stressed that students during the elementary years are getting prepared for fundamental academic behaviors while in the middle school years, students develop inferential thinking skills. As transition continues, Wolpert-Gawron, stated that students' brains spend energy deciding what knowledge will be stored in short or long-term memory, and decision-making abilities begin to develop.

Rice & Dolgin (2005), found that young adolescents, students ages 10-14, experience a period of intense physical, cognitive, and psychological change (as cited in Parker, 2009). Young adolescents often exhibit behaviors representative of being between two life stages, childhood and adulthood, thus making work with this age group dynamic, challenging, and complex (Parker, 2009). Parker, also concurred that young adolescents are characterized by their developing sense of social justice and their ability to conceptualize the future.

In the USA, the current model for most middle schools is one that focuses on academics, citizenship, and social-emotional development, as opposed to a junior high (miniature high school) model for the middle school grades. Empirical research on the topic of appropriate grade configuration is sparse (Anfara & Bubbler, 2005). Efficacy of the current middle school model is being questioned and accountability demands are placing a strain on middle schools' ability to meet the academic needs of students, while addressing the other focal points of the middle grade schools (Sanzo, Sherman, & Clayton, 2011). High School reform initiatives, meanwhile, are converging on the clear mission of getting students ready for college and careers, with growing consensus that

the requirements for either path are the same: rigorous coursework in core academic subjects and proficiency in 21st century skills (Kay, 2009). Kay (2009), further stipulated that this means improving student enrollment and achievement in challenging courses, increasing graduation rates, and making diplomas meaningful.

Students and 21st Century Learning Skills

What are 21st century skills? Kay (2009), explains that these skills include intelligent reasoning, positive attitudes, and practical skills that enable students to learn and achieve in core subjects at higher levels. The National Education Association, 2015 emphasized the importance of developing four 21st century skills called the 4Cs: collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking (as cited in Robb, 2017).

Hilton (2015), clustered 21st century skills into three broad domains of competence: the cognitive domain (reasoning and memory), the intrapersonal domain (capacity to manage behavior and emotions), and the interpersonal domain (expression of ideas and interpreting and responding to messages from others). Robb (2017), suggested that everything students do at school should equip them with the 4Cs and build the interpersonal, creative, and analytical skills necessary for solving global problems such as limited water and food supplies, climate changes, immigration, and other humanitarian problems that arise as the future unfolds. Such skills motivate, engage and instill confidence in students. According to DiBenedetto & Myers (2016), during the 21st century, the role of education in preparing students has expanded beyond the local community to the global economy. The future of education may seem daunting and challenging if educators lack a vision of what matters most for students to be prepared for the 21st century (Trybus, 2013).

Students educated in the 21st century need to think through a competitive lens, work collaboratively with their peers and be able to defend and support their learning. Developing proficiency in 21st century skills, along with deep content knowledge, should be the mission of middle schools and the outcome of middle grades education. National and state efforts to improve education over the past decade have done little to carve out a singular mission for middle schools (Kay, 2009). Trybus (2013), postulated that what educators know and practice in teaching now will not be adequate for the future with the changing roles of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It is imperative to acknowledge the impact of technology, constructivism, school safety, and the needs of the emergent learners.

The 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress found that at least one-third of eighth graders are not prepared for challenging reading and mathematics studies (Kay, 2009). Kay, also indicates that American eighth graders do not stack up well on international assessments such as the Program for International Assessment (PISA) or the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) compared to their peers in advanced nations. Kay, concluded that middle school performance suffers on these assessments, especially PISA, because students do not have the critical thinking and problem-solving skills to apply their knowledge to real-world contexts.

It is the goal to educate and prepare students to meet the overarching demands to compete, be challenged and for children to retain more information when they learn by doing. Dewey proposed that learning by doing has a great benefit in shaping student learning (Bell, 2010). Egan (1997), stated as for instruction, schools aim to teach children the information that will help them develop a rational view about both their

community and the world (as cited in Adigüzel, Dalioglu, & Ergünay, 2017). Hameline (1994), stated that instruction is not mere transformation of information, but rather it is the effort to advance people's thinking skills for their cognitive development and to furnish them with knowledge and skills necessary to gain an overall understanding about the nature and human life that surrounds them (as cited in Adigüzel, et al., 2017).

Egan (1997), referenced Plato in emphasizing that schools should provide students with information and skills that will bring out a rational reality for them instead of raising them as successful citizens or guiding them to share their peers' norms and values. Filloux (1993), addressed on the contrary, Durkheim stated that the primary goal of education is to adjust individuals so they can live in harmony with their society and to teach them social rules and norms, which favors the functions of socialization and qualification over instruction (as cited in Adigüzel, et al., 2017).

The research study conducted by Adigüzel, et al., (2017), found that primary schools play a major role in terms of improving students' emotional characteristics and social skills and equipping students with cognitive skills required to achieve high-level thinking tasks such as understanding, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Kay (2009), articulated that all students need a rigorous education to thrive in a complex, connected, and constantly changing world. Kay, emphasized that competencies in the 21st century skills that differentiate the leaders and laggards on the international playing field – the arena in which every industry and individual in advanced nations competes today is essential.

The skills of communication, critical thinking, and problem solving are essential to thriving as a citizen in the 21st century. These skills are required in order to contribute

as a member of society, operate effectively in post-secondary institutions, and be competitive in the global market (Carlgren, 2013). Combining proficiency in 21st century skills with core subject knowledge should be at the heart of middle school education (Kay, 2009).

Carlgren, 2013 suggested that high school students are hindered in their learning of communication, critical thinking, and problem solving by three factors: The structure of the current western education system, the complexity of the skills themselves, and the competence of the teachers to teach these skills in conjunction with their course material. Kay (2009), identified that students want and need engaging work that stimulates their curiosity, involves them in decision making, provides some autonomy and choice in learning, improves self-regulation, and allows opportunities for creative expression. Trybus (2013), indicated that we need to take time to teach kids to think ... we need to create thinkers, problem solvers, and decision makers.

Piaget said, “knowing what to do when you don’t know what to do is intelligent behavior” (Trybus, 2013). Holubova` (2010), emphasized that educational institutions have the responsibility for educating all students with the goal of students reaching their full potential. Students of the 21st century live and learn in a much different world than many educational institutions are currently providing; therefore, present educational systems face a difficult choice between individualistic teacher-centric traditional methods, which are becoming irrelevant, and adapting to new collaborative, team-centered methods that will bridge the generational gap and connect how students live and learn to the educational setting (as cited in Lemley, Schumacherm & Vesey, 2014). Trybus (2013), asked the question, how do we develop students who are self-reliant,

resourceful, self-motivated, and self-initiating to direct themselves for problems that we can't foresee in the future?

The Alliance for Excellence Education (2011) and Kassim & Fatimah (2010) professed that competition, among other things, drives the need to communicate, innovate and solve problems using ingenious and multifaceted methods (as cited in Carlgren, 2013). The Alliance for Excellence Education (2011) postulated, it is vital that current high school graduates develop the skills of communication, critical thinking and problem solving. Greenstein (2012) and Sahlberg (2006) indicated that the issue of teaching and learning such skills stems from a conflict between a teacher's need to teach these skills and the demand for him/her to have students achieve on high stakes achievement tests (as cited in Carlgren, 2013). Paul and Elder (2008); Rosefsky and Opfer (2012), and Sherblom (2010) alluded to the complex and involved nature of these skills requiring a focused attention, energy, and time be given for appropriate acquisition and application to occur. Carlgren (2013), identified that teacher competence from the view point of having the skills themselves, a clear understanding of the skills to teach them, and the professional development and tools to adequately teach the skills is questionable.

Galloway & Lasley (2010), asserted that school life, including the activities of the teachers and students, must change in order to keep pace with the changing landscape caused by the informational age in which students now live (as cited in Lemley, et al., 2014). Spencer (2013), postulated that teachers feel compelled to focus instruction on testable content and neglect outside life-skills (as cited in Carlgren, 2013). Trybus (2013), spoke about moving towards a more inquiry-based model of learning and

problem based learning where students own their learning where such learning becomes more relevant because students are solving problems or doing an investigation or an experiment. Berger & Starbird (2012), stated that it is incorrect to assume students are born with an inherent ability to think effectively. The skills must be modeled, practiced, and taught (as cited in Carlgren, 2013).

In the future, children must enter a workforce in which they will be judged on their performance. They will be evaluated not only on their outcomes, but also on their collaborative, negotiating, planning, and organizational skills (Bell, 2010). Trybus (2013), indicated that learning needs to have greater purpose and meaning – for students to have opportunities to work collaboratively on real-world problems aligned with 21st century skills of entrepreneurship and enterprise. As a result, creative thinkers will need to be able to confront future problems that have not been previously observed.

Bell (2010), professed that by implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) opportunities, students are prepared to meet the twenty-first century with preparedness and repertoire of skills they can use successfully. In PBL, students drive their own learning through inquiry, as well as work collaboratively to research and create projects that reflect their knowledge (Bell, 2010). Bell, alluded to the outcomes of PBL is greater understanding of the topic, deeper learning, higher level reading and increased motivation to learn. Furthermore, Bell sought to discover that PBL is a key strategy for creating independent thinkers and learners as children solve real-world problems by designing their own inquiries, planning their learning, organizing their research, and implementing a multitude of learning strategies. Based on the work of Gultekin (2005), he found that evidence exists that through PBL, students become better researchers,

problem solvers, and higher order thinkers (as cited in Bell, 2010). Hart (2015), posited that employers have indicated that students who complete some type of applied learning or project based learning experience are more valuable job candidates than those who have not engaged in applied learning (as cited in DiBenedetto & Myers, 2016).

Students who have grown up in the digital 21st century have an expectation for speed. The attention spans of 21st century students are shorter than previous generations of students, they multitask more, and they are accustomed to having 24-hour access to information. Such students are socially oriented and benefit from collaborative learning opportunities (Lemley, et al., 2014).

Students in middle grades are developmentally primed for learning 21st century skills. Global awareness, civic engagement, and health and financial literacy are 21st century themes that middle school students find relevant and challenging (Kay, 2009). Lewis & Morris (1998), indicated that children possess five basic needs for positive development: 1) a personal relationship with a caring adult; 2) a safe place to live; 3) a healthy start toward their future; 4) a marketable skill to use after high school graduation and 5) an opportunity to contribute to their community (as cited in DiBenedetto & Myers, 2016).

According to Hilton (2015), research to date has identified a number of practices and principles that contribute to deeper learning and transfer within discipline or topic area. Instruction for deeper learning begins with a focus on clearly delineated learning goals along with assessments to measure student progress toward and attainment of the goals. Emphasis in development of new curriculum and instructional programs that include research-based teaching methods such as using multiple and varied

representations of concepts and tasks; encourage elaboration, questioning, and explanation; engaging learners in challenging tasks, while supporting them with guidance, feedback, and encouragement to reflect on learning; teach with examples and cases; prime student motivation by connecting topics to students personal lives and interests, engage students in collaborative problem solving, drawing attention to the knowledge and skills students are developing, rather than grades or scores; and use of formative assessments to make learning goals clear to students, monitor and provide feedback.

The research study conducted by Carlgren (2013), indicated that the education system is not changing fast enough for current students to be guaranteed they will learn the skills required to be competitive in the 21st century. By ensuring the development of communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills before high school graduation will offer all students more opportunity to compete in post-secondary education, the work force, the global market, and in life. As the caretakers of such an important endeavor, it is of the utmost importance that educational institutions continue to adapt to the needs of students as the society changes (Lemley, et al., 2014). Casner-Lotto & Berrington (2006), noted that employers across the United States cite the 21st century skills of professionalism/work ethic, oral and written communications, teamwork, and collaboration, and critical thinking and problem solving as the most important skills that recently hired graduates from high school and two and four year postsecondary institutions need (as cited in Kay, 2009). Hurtado & DeAngelo (2012), indicated that along with learning and thinking skills, students should be literate and

equipped with the necessary skills to advance in the world as citizens (as cited in DiBenedetto & Myers, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that follows (Figure 2.3) identifies the essential role of the secondary principal in defining indicators impacting students' academic, social and emotional development as they transition from elementary to secondary school. Outlined are three essential organizational structures of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as ingredients to support the middle level philosophy resulting in positive outcomes leading to the overall success of middle level students.

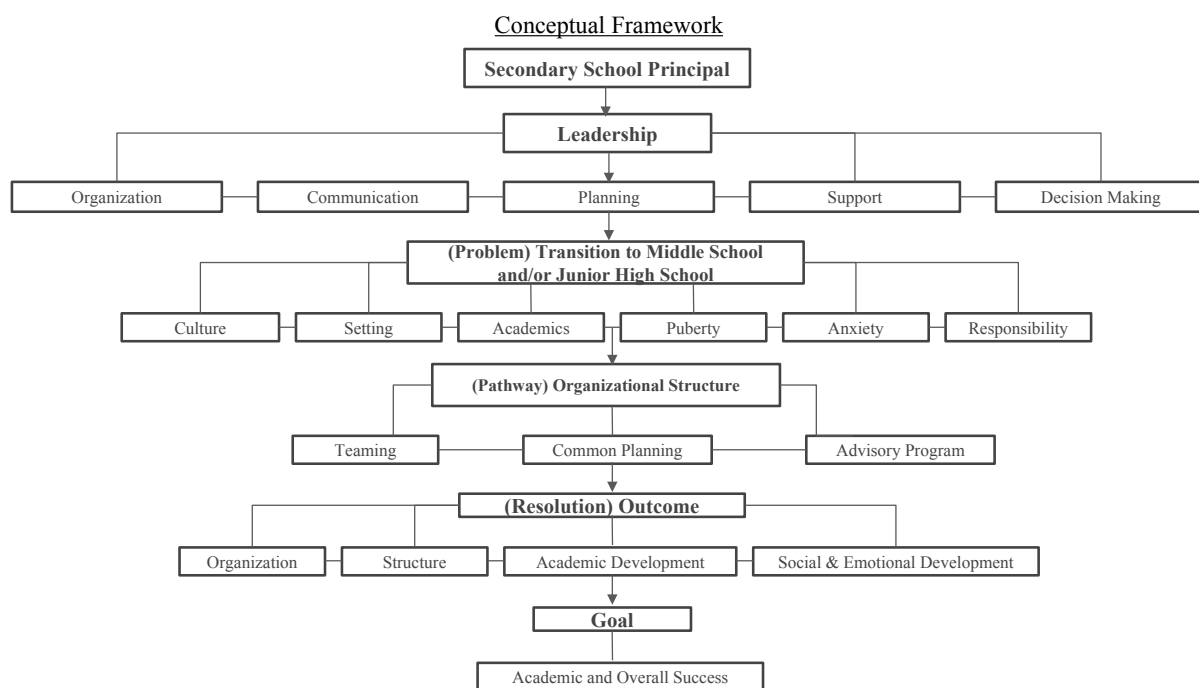


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework - Flowchart of how leadership influences the organizational structures of teaming, common planning and advisory to support the overarching goal of academic success for students.

The second conceptual framework illustrated in this study depicts a soccer ball (Figure 2.4), as captured in a visual, the unique leadership qualities of a secondary

principal and instructional qualities of middle level teachers. The soccer ball is an object in motion when played, that spins through all essential educational components (polygons) making up the construct of the soccer ball. Components of essential leadership qualities to promote and support structural change to advance the transition of students from elementary school to secondary learning are captured. There are essential components of, but not limited to organization, collaboration, planning, support, communication, decision making, innovation, and creativity essential to interplay in order to support the development of the middle level student.

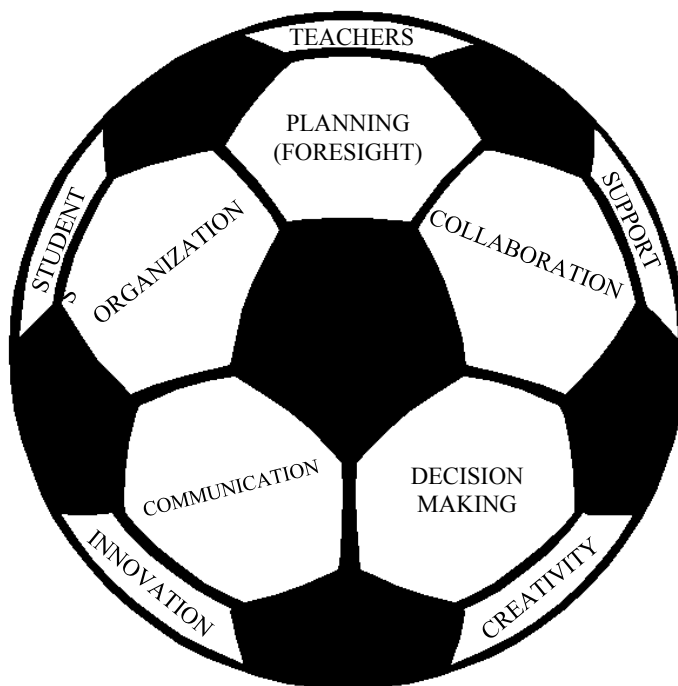


Figure 2.4: Conceptual Framework – The soccer ball is in continual motion when played with representative polygons identifying essential teacher and administrative responsibilities to support middle level student learning objectives while supporting organizational structures of teaming, common planning, and student advisory.

Summary

A close examination of the existing literature on middle school practices provides

important insight into the struggles, trends, concerns, and issues that helped define and characterize the growth of the middle school movement. Such insight can also help middle school educators and researches (re)imagine a vision for the future as the middle level community enters its second half century.

The youth of America created dreams when given the opportunity in middle school classrooms that adhered to the middle school model of excellence that was created in the 1980s, studied in the 1990s, and modeled in the 2000s. The movement had created understandings of where middle schools needed to go. The challenge of the next decade would include a way to get there (Schaefer et al., 2016).

Chapter 2 identified the review of literature synthesizing studies published in peer-reviewed journals. Literature detailing middle level organizational structures (common planning, teaming and advisory) and the historical development of the middle school along with essential leadership qualities to support organizational structures of common planning, teaming and an advisory structure while being cognizant of the social and emotional development and 21st century influences and demands on the middle level student were explored. As the foundation of organizational structures in the middle school are supported through the building administrator it was important to research theoretical frameworks reflective to Robert Owen's Organizational Theory; specific to how people function in organizations followed by reference to the work of Vroom and Yetton as well as Hersey and Blanchard on decision making and how decisions are made by effective educational leaders.

Although this review of the literature has clearly demonstrated that research has shown that these three organizational structures have a positive influence on the middle

level student, what is not clear is how or to what extent such structures influence student learning as assessment data was not analyzed nor collected. In order to provide additional clarity to the influence these three school structures have on student learning, there needs to be research regarding the presence, absence, type, frequency, and/or duration of these structures in middle schools (Corey, 2014). Chapter 3 examines the research design and methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the secondary principal's perspective to their role; in addition, to their perception of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as essential middle school priorities to prepare students to achieve, acclimate and be successful upon entering high school. The principals' views allowed the researcher to present a distinctive set of data that may address the gap in the research literature on teaming, common planning an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level.

Rationale for Research Approach

A descriptive quantitative study was conducted to examine the presence or absence of organizational structures; exclusively with regard to common planning, teaming and an advisory concept. The rationale for selecting to use a quantitative research format for the study was based upon the research problem which lead to the crafting of questions asked in the study along with a closed-ended approach leading the researcher to identify set response categories (i.e. strongly agree, strongly disagree, and so forth) where trends of explanations need to be addressed. Furthermore, with the approach being inquiry based, it complemented the research literature in describing trends and explaining relationships among variables found in the literature. The study displayed researcher objectivity and lack of bias (Cresswell, 2018).

The study analyzed results obtained from Long Island middle schools (specific to grades 6-8), junior high schools (specific to grades 7-9), and junior-senior high schools

(specific to grades 7-8). A self-administered online web survey was provided to secondary administrators to gather data on their perspective to the use and effective implementation of common planning, teaming and student advisory along with qualities of a building leader deemed necessary to overall support implementation and sustenance of these organizational structures. Quantitative statistical research techniques consisting of *descriptive statistics*, *ANOVA*, and *t-test* were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data which indicated general tendencies in the data (mean, mode, and median), the spread of the scores (variance, standard deviation, and range) or a comparison of how one score relates to all others such as percentile rank (Cresswell, 2018).

It is thought that the obtained data will direct educational researches and make significant contributions to developing policies of educational research. Descriptive researchers attempt to describe and explain the events, objects, resources, groups and various fields. By this means, it becomes possible to understand them well, make categorizations and determine relations. In the descriptive research model, the features of science such as observation, recording, determining relations between events, making generalizations through controlled unchangeable principles are attempted to be described (Selçuk, Palanci, Kandemir, & Dündar, 2014).

Research Setting / Context

The study analyzed results obtained from Long Island middle schools (specific to grades 6-8), junior high schools (specific to grades 7-9), and junior-senior high schools (specific to grades 7-8). To further comprehend the educational setting of Long Island

specific to the study, the researcher detailed information regarding Long Island schools for the audience of the study to use as a guide when reviewing the research.

Long Island is one of the largest school systems in New York State outside of the New York City public school system. Long Island has a large number of public school districts when compared to the rest of New York state and the nation. Long Island Schools are composed of private, parochial and public establishments. There are 127 public Long Island school districts with an approximate enrollment of 476,000 students and approximately 36,000 teachers. Approximately 88% of graduating students embark into higher education. Each year many of the 127 public school districts in Nassau and Suffolk Counties are recognized for their stellar education programs and superior teachers. The region boasts unparalleled special education programs for students with a wide spectrum of disabilities, as well as nationally leading ESL opportunities for bilingual students. A report by Niche, Inc. ranks 42 Long Island schools in the top 100 in the state. Long Island also features considerable higher education opportunities, including over 17 colleges, universities, and trade schools (<https://www.LISchools.com>).

The information that follows summarizes statistical school related information specific to both Nassau and Suffolk Counties in Long Island, New York. Table 3.1 synthesizes information designated by county inclusive to the number of students and teachers, student-teacher ratio, spending per student, average teacher salary and years teaching, students with reduced price lunch, students with limited English proficiency, and student dropout rate.

	Nassau County School	Suffolk County School
Total # Students	211,771	264,322
Total # Teachers	16,544	19,293
Student/Teacher Ratio	12.8	13.7
Spending per Student	\$16,943	\$15,004
Average Teacher Salary	\$75,284	\$66,087
Average Years Teaching	12	10
Students getting reduced price lunch	18.1%	22.5%
Students with limited English Proficiency	5.6%	4.6%
Student Dropout Rate	1.3%	2.4%

Table 3.1: Statistical school based information by county on Long Island, New York. (<https://www.LISchools.com>)

The Suffolk County Public School District comprises two of the three major district cooperatives on Long Island, including Eastern and Western Suffolk County Public Schools. Eastern Suffolk is an educational cooperative of 51 school districts, while Western Suffolk has 18 local school districts. The third major district cooperative is the Nassau County school system, encompassing over 50 districts. Long Island school districts vary in size as well as vary greatly by race and social economic status. Each school within the Long Island system sets forth the goal of ensuring that every

student meets or excels beyond the standards set in place by the New York State Board of Regents (<http://www.LISchools.com>).

Concern resonates with the relationship between property tax and funding of Long Island school districts. Property taxes are disproportionately high because more than 60% goes to fund public education. About 17% of the average property tax bill is levied by the counties. Furthermore, paying the administrative costs of staffing 125 school districts on Long Island is exorbitant, especially when some school superintendents earn more than half a million annually. To control property tax increases, the state has imposed either a 2% tax cap or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. Districts can vote to go beyond the cap by 60-40 margin. But using property taxes to fund public schools rewards the rich districts—especially those with lots of commercial businesses and penalizes the poor ones without a solid commercial base (Hildebrand, 2018). Administrative salaries on Long Island are prestigious as a result to the demand and expectation of the job in sustaining Long Island to have affluent school districts to educate students along the prek-12 continuum.

Participants

In total, 137 surveys were sent out to Long Island school secondary principals. There were 64 secondary principals who responded to the survey. As prefaced, the participants represented Nassau and Suffolk Counties middle school principals, junior high school principals and junior-senior high school principals. Based upon descriptive statistics, the principals responding to the survey have been in the field of education 16 or more years in representing 72% of participants with ages within the range of 40-49 years of age who held the position of principal from 0-10 years. This data depicts

accuracy as a result to most recent retirements and advancement of principals into higher levels of administration within districts.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the essential leadership qualities of Long Island secondary school principals in order to support organizational structures, deemed essential, to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations?
2. What are secondary principals perceptions of the organizational structure of teaming to support students in the secondary school setting?
3. What are secondary principals perceptions of the organizational structure of common planning to support students in the secondary school setting?
4. What are secondary principals perceptions of the organizational structure of an advisory program to support students in the secondary school setting?

Using respondent information from middle school principals, junior high school principals and junior-senior high school principals a profile was created based on the responses of demographic survey questions. Demographic questions including respondent's years of experience in education, their most current administrative title, the number of years held in the current administrative position, their gender, their age, highest academic degree earned and the number of students enrolled in their respective district in grades 6-8.

The first demographic variable analyzed was years of experience in education in any role.

Table 3.2 *Frequency and Percentage to Years of Experience in any Role of Education (N = 64).*

Years	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 - 5	2	3.1	3.1
6-10	3	4.7	7.8
11-15	13	20.3	28.1
16-20	17	26.6	54.7
21 or more	29	45.3	100.0
Total	64	100.0	

Table 3.2 identifies the participating principal's years of experience in any role in education. Three percent of the principals surveyed were within their first 5 years of experience. Five percent of the principals surveyed were between 6 and 10 years of experience, 20% of the principals surveyed were between 11 and 15 years of experience, 27% of the principals surveyed were between 16 and 20 years of experience, and 45% of the principals surveyed had 21 and longer years of experience. The majority of the principals had 21 or more years of experience followed by 27% having 16 to 20 years of experience. The next demographic variable analyzed was current administrative position in table 3.3.

Table 3.3 *Frequency and Percentage to Current Administrative Position (N = 64).*

Administrative Position	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Middle School Principal (Grades 6-8)	48	75.0	75.0
Junior High School Principal	3	4.7	79.7

(Grades 7-9)			
Junior-Senior High School Principal (Grades 7-12)	13	20.3	100.0
Total	64	100.0	

Table 3.3 identifies the participating principal's years of experience in a specific secondary principal role in education. Seventy-five percent of the principal's respondents are middle school principals in grades 6-8. Five percent of the principal's respondent are principals in a junior high school setting and 20% of the principal's respondent are principals in a junior-senior high school setting.

The majority of the principals responding are middle school principals followed by 20% being junior-senior high school principals and 5% being junior high school principals. As a result of a low sample size of junior high principals, the study will combine junior high school and junior-senior high school principals as one category. The next demographic variable analyzed was number of years respondents are in their current administrative position in table 3.4.

Table 3.4 *Frequency and Percentage to Number of Years Respondents are in their Current Administrative Position (N = 64).*

Years	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-5	26	40.6	40.6
6-10	19	29.7	70.3
11-15	12	18.8	89.1
16-20	6	9.4	98.4
21-25	1	1.6	100.0

Total	64	100.0	0
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Table 3.4 shows the descriptive statistics related to the number of years respondents are in their current administrative position. Forty-one percent of the principals were within their first five years of experience. Thirty percent of the principals were between 6 and 10 years, 19% were between 11 and 15 years, 9% were between 16 and 20 years, 2% were between 21 and 25 years of experience. The majority of principals had fewer than 5 years of experience as a secondary principal followed by 30% having 6 to 10 years of experience. The next demographic variable analyzed was gender in table 3.5.

Table 3.5 *Frequency and Percent for Gender of Respondents (N=64)*

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	23	35.9	35.9
Male	40	62.5	98.4
Prefer not to say	1	1.6	100.0
Total	64	100.0	

Table 3.5 identifies that 36% of the respondents to the survey are female and 63% of the respondents are male. Two percent of the respondents selected not to identify their gender. The next variable analyzed was respondent's ages in table 3.6.

Table 3.6 *Frequency and Percentage to Age of Respondents (N = 64)*

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
21-29	1	1.6	1.6

30-39	14	21.9	23.4
40-49	31	48.4	71.9
50-59	16	25.0	96.9
60-69	2	3.1	100.0
Total	64	100.0	0

As viewed in table 3.6 two percent of the respondents are between 21 and 29 years of age. 22% of the respondents are between 30 and 39 years of age, 48% of the respondents are between 40 and 49 years of age, 25% of the respondents are between 50 and 59 years of age and 3% of the respondents are between 60 and 69 years of age. The next variable analyzed was respondent's highest academic degree earned in table 3.7.

Table 3.7 *Frequency and Percentage for Highest Degree Earned (N = 64)*

Degree	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Doctorate	11	17.2	17.2
Master and Advanced Graduate Certificate	51	79.7	96.9
Masters	2	3.1	100.0
Total	64	100.0	

Table 3.7 identifies that 17% of the respondents have a doctorate. Eighty percent of the respondents have a masters and advanced graduate certificate and 3% have a master's degree. The next variable analyzed in table 3.8 identifies the number of students enrolled in grades 6-8.

Table 3.8 *Frequency and Percent to the Number of Students Enrolled in Grades 6-8 (N = 64).*

Enrollment	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
249 - below	5	7.8	7.8
250 - 449	4	6.3	14.1
450 - 899	36	56.3	70.3
900 +	19	29.7	100.0
Total	64	100.0	0

Table 3.8 indicates that 8% of the respondents have less than 249 students enrolled in grades 6-8. Six percent of the respondents have enrollments between 250 and 449 students, 56% have enrollments between 450 and 899 students and 30% have enrollments of 900 or more students in grades 6-8. The next variable to be analyzed will be in table 3.9 frequency and percentage for school location.

Table 3.9 *Frequency and Percentage for School Location (N = 64).*

Location	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Rural	2	3.1	3.1
Suburban	60	93.8	96.9
Urban	2	3.1	100.0
Total	64	100.0	0

Table 3.9 identifies that 94% of the respondent's school location is classified as suburban while 3% equally classify their school location as either rural or urban.

Data Collection Method

A quantitative study was conducted. The data was collected through a self-administered online web survey which was provided to secondary administrators; most specific to middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school administrators. Public school principals across Long Island, including Nassau and Suffolk County, were invited to participate. Principals were given the survey electronically to allow them the leisure of responding to the survey questions at their convenience and within their own setting. Data was gathered to assess administrative perspective to the use and effective implementation of common planning, teaming and student advisory along with essential leadership qualities deemed necessary to overall support the implementation and sustenance of these organizational structures.

There are 127 school districts in Long Island, New York in representing both Suffolk County and Nassau County. Suffolk County has 77 middle schools, junior high schools and junior-senior high schools collectively and Nassau County has 60 middle schools, junior high schools and junior-senior high schools collectively. Combined, both counties represented have a total of 137 (N) middle schools, junior high schools and junior-senior high schools. 137 school principals were surveyed to gather data to support my study.

All participants were requested to complete a self-administered online web survey instrument through Google Forms on a voluntary basis. The survey instrument included demographic information and questions on leadership perspective aligned with organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory in the secondary

school setting. The survey included five independent parts consisting of leadership, teaming, common planning, advisory, and a general reflection.

The survey questions selected to be used for this study examined the presence or absence of three organizational structures and essential leadership beliefs, perceptions and experience of administrators in suburban Long Island secondary schools. For the purpose of the study, secondary schools to be assessed consist of grades 6 through 8, 7 through 8 or 7 through 9. Data will be distinct to middle level learning environments inclusive of students in grades 6-8, 7-9 or 7-12 in a building construct of a middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school. A list of secondary principals surveyed with their email addresses was obtained through Eastern Suffolk BOCES and the Middle School Principal's Association. The survey took into account that some of the schools surveyed use some and not all, and in various degree of priority and expectation of the organizational structures defined in the study. Each of the five parts of the survey are described below.

The first part of the survey focused on collecting data on the experience as an educational leader and experience within the field of education. Questions asked were about teaching experience, administrative experience, personal educational experience, demographic information related to the district of employment, and administrative perceptions. Open-ended, closed-ended or a Likert-type rating scale questions or statements was used to collect the data.

The second part of the survey focused on collecting data about the presence or absence of the organizational structure of teaming. Questions were asked about the type of teaming that occurs, the structure of teaming, staffing on a team, curricula focus, and

perceptions of teaming. Open-ended, closed-ended or a Likert-type rating scale questions or statements were used to collect the data.

The third part of the survey focused on collecting data about the presence or absence of the organizational structure of common planning. Questions were asked if time is allocated, whether grade level or team common planning occurred, and perceptions of common planning. Open-ended, closed-ended or a Likert-type rating scale questions or statements was used to collect the data.

The fourth part of the survey focused on collecting data about the presence or absence of the organizational structure of advisory. Questions were asked if advisory has been implemented, if the school day schedule accommodated this organizational structure, the purpose of this organizational structure, and the length of time allocated for this structure within the confines of the school day. Open-ended, closed-ended or a Likert-type rating scale questions or statements were used to collect the data.

The fifth part of the survey focused on collecting data about a general reflection based upon the organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory. Two summary questions were asked that included ranking the influence of the three organizational structures. Closed-ended or a Likert-type rating scale questions or statements were used to collect the data.

The different components of the survey through the lens of administrative leadership was broken down as follows in the survey instrument.

Variables	Survey Question Number	Statistical Methodology
Leadership	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	Descriptive Statistics
Research Question #1	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 46, 47	ANOVA T-Test
Teaming	19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25,	Descriptive Statistics
Research Question #2	26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31	Mean Comparison
Common Planning	32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38,	Descriptive Statistics
Research Question #3	39	Mean Comparison
Advisory	40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45	Descriptive Statistics
Research Question #4		Mean Comparison

Table 3.10 Survey Analysis

Data Analysis Methods

The researcher selected to use a comparative and quantitative design to explore secondary principal's perceptions to leadership and organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the advisory construct in middle level education. The researcher analyzed the data by exporting survey responses from Google Forms to Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Quantitative statistical research techniques consisting of *descriptive statistics*, *ANOVA*, and *T-Test* were employed to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data which indicated general tendencies in the data (mean, mode, and median), the spread of the scores (variance, standard deviation, and range) or a comparison of how one score related to all others such as z score or percentile rank (Cresswell, 2018).

Even though the research was based on a quantitative research approach, there are two questions in the survey calling for narrative responses in providing some qualitative data as to middle school (junior high school or junior-senior high school) principals actions, beliefs and philosophy of the designated organizational structures of teaming and common planning. The rationale for the use of descriptive statistics was to analyze the given data received by conducting a survey to assess and meaningfully present descriptive data with numerical indices. The analysis of variance (*ANOVA*) allowed the researcher to determine the statistical significance of differences of means while the *T-Test* was used to determine whether there was statistical significant difference between the means of two matched or non-independent samples (Fraenkel, et.al., 2014). While not a full research based mixed method, questions 26 and 38 in the survey reflects qualitative data was analyzed as such with regard to descriptive demographic statistics. As such, the data was assessed to uncover patterns and themes in responses that emerged from the data in making validated conclusions.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Quantitative research methods are designed to ensure that the data collected and analyzed provide reliable and validated conclusions. Fowler (2009), asserted that self-administered instruments yield more accurate answers on sensitive questions than open-ended surveys or interviews (as cited in Lemley, et al., 2014). Reliability is defined as the degree to which scores obtained from an instrument are consistent measures of whatever the instrument measures. Validity is defined as the degree to which correct inferences can be made based on results from an instrument; depends not only on the instrument, but also on the instrumentation process and the characteristics of the group

studied (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2014). The survey instrument used in this study, in its initial use ensured content and face validity which was established through a panel of experts, reviewed by a doctoral committee, and pilot study (Corey, 2014). Since the survey instrument was designed to study exclusive middle school instructional scheduling, teaming and common planning; modifications were necessary to meet the needs of this study specific to the focus of leadership, teaming, common planning and advisory in secondary learning within the Long Island region. Furthermore, the instrument aligns with the theoretical framework of Situational Leadership Theory; specific to the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model and the Vroom-Yetton Model which set the footing for questions asked by the researcher. Permission and acceptance of the modifications made to the survey were shared with the originator of the survey instrument where approval was granted to use and to administer the instrument as deemed necessary to collect data for the study.

Upon making modifications to the survey instrument with exclusive emphasis given to middle school leadership, teaming, common planning, and the advisory concept; the survey was reviewed by a committee comprised of sitting secondary school administrators to ensure the questions presented were clear, aligned with secondary middle level leadership concepts and beliefs, and measure their intended purpose and research questions. After feedback was gathered, appropriate modifications were addressed to the survey instrument and then reviewed again by the committee.

Once modifications were made to the survey based upon suggestions and considerations, permission was requested from the St. John's University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to administer the survey. After receiving permission from St.

John's University IRB to administer the survey, a letter of solicitation was emailed to secondary principals that included a link to the survey.

Limitations

There are some limitations to the study that need to be presented and discussed. The sample surveyed is limited to public school principals in Long Island, New York. Most specifically, limited to principals of buildings consisting of educating students in the middle school setting within buildings having a grade level configuration of a 6-8, 7-9 and 7-12 educational construct. The researcher is unaware of the knowledge each participant in the survey may have regarding school building leadership and organizational structures to support middle level education.

Another threat to internal validity is location. The location of administrators surveyed was limited to Long Island settings of Suffolk and Nassau Counties. The results of the study may not be generalized to geographic areas outside of Long Island, New York and to principals serving non-public schools. The original survey instrument to be administered was designed with the purpose to study exclusive middle school instructional scheduling, teaming and common planning. Modifications were necessary to meet the needs of this study specific to the focus of leadership, teaming, common planning and advisory in secondary learning within the Long Island region.

Summary

Chapter 3 synthesized the rational and research approach for the study as well as explained the data collection and analysis method. Descriptive information was provided to clearly explain the educational setting in representing Long Island, New York where data was collected and analyzed. An analysis of respondents (N=64),

demographic data was analyzed in using descriptive statistics to provide the researcher with relevant information. This study examined the presence or absence of three organizational structures (common planning, teaming and advisory) along with qualities of essential leadership in Long Island, New York secondary schools.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS and FINDINGS

This study investigated the secondary principal's perspective to their role; in addition, to their perception of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as essential middle school priorities to prepare students to achieve, acclimate and be successful upon entering high school. The principals' views allowed the researcher to present a distinctive set of data that may address the gap in the research literature on teaming, common planning, and an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level.

The data collected by means of a principal survey via Google Forms were analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the essential leadership qualities of Long Island secondary school principals in order to support organizational structures, deemed essential, to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations?
2. What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of teaming to support students in the secondary school setting?
3. What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of common planning to support students in the secondary school setting?
4. What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of an advisory program to support students in the secondary school setting?

The descriptive quantitative study analyzed results obtained from Long Island middle school (specific to grades 6-8), junior high school (specific to grades 7-9), and

junior-senior high school (specific to grades 7-8) principals. A self-administered online web survey was provided to secondary principals to gather data on their perspective to the use and effective implementation of common planning, teaming and student advisory along with qualities of a building leader deemed necessary to overall support implementation and sustenance of these organizational structures.

The survey was sent to 137 principals. Four electronic letters of solicitation were sent to the sample of 137 principals over an approximate 6-week time span. As a result, 64 principals responded to the survey; for a rate of 46.72%. Data from the 64 responding principals were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The sample was considered large enough to assess select patterns and trends emergent from the data collected to provide valid conclusions.

Research Question 1

What are the essential leadership qualities of Long Island secondary school principals in order to support organizational structures, deemed essential, to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations?

Table 4.1 *Frequency and Percent to the Number of Students Enrolled in Grades 6-8 (N =64).*

Enrollment	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
249 - below	5	7.8	7.8
250 - 449	4	6.3	14.1
450 - 899	36	56.3	70.3
900 +	19	29.7	100.0
Total	64	100.0	

Middle school and junior high school and junior-senior high school principals have a similar enrollment of students. Each environment has similar resources and concepts, but with different scenarios. Table 4.1 indicates that 8% of the respondents have less than 249 students enrolled in grades 6-8. Six percent of the respondents have enrollments between 250 and 449 students, 56% have enrollments between 450 and 899 students and 30% have enrollments of 900 or more students in grades 6-8.

Table 4.2 *T-Test Opinions of Instructional Leaders Levels of Importance Necessary to Support Organizational Structures (N = 64).*

Survey Question	School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
9. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to be an instructional leader?	Middle School	48	4.625	.4892	.0706
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.563	.6292	.1573
11. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to have a thorough understanding of all State policies and procedures?	Middle School	48	4.250	.7579	.1094
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.313	.8732	.2183
12. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to maintain a strong working	Middle School	48	4.750	.4376	.0632
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.875	.3416	.0854

relationship with school faculty and staff?					
13. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to assess teachers for their educational beliefs, values and practices?	Middle School	48	4.438	.6156	.0889
	Junior High & Junior- Senior High	16	4.250	.8563	.2141
14. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to provide him/herself with meaningful and relevant professional development to enhance their personal professional knowledge?	Middle School	48	4.542	.5035	.0727
	Junior High & Junior- Senior High	16	4.563	.5123	.1281

Research question number 1 examined leadership qualities perceived by Long Island secondary school principals to be important in order to support organizational structures to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations.

In the survey, 6 questions pertained to the principals perceived opinion of important indicators as summarized in table 4.2. A complete summary of the analysis is

found in the appendix A of supplemental data (4.2). Questions numbered 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 asked surveyors to assess the importance level on each task. Middle School and Junior High School and Junior Senior High School principals perceived maintaining a strong working relationship with school faculty and staff most important with a mean, respectively of 4.750 and 4.875. The task was followed by Middle School Principals importance as instructional leaders with a mean of 4.625 while Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School principal's importance was found to be within instructional leadership and in providing themselves with meaningful and relevant professional development to enhance their personal professional knowledge with a mean of 4.563 in both levels of importance. The importance of Middle School Principals having a thorough understanding of all State policies and procedures was valued as the least important task in the survey with a mean of 4.250. Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated the least important task was to assess teachers for their educational beliefs, values and practices with a mean of 4.250.

Table 4.3 *Independent Sample Test – Levene's Test for Equality of variances (T-Test for Equality of Means).*

Survey Question	Var.	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% Conf. Lower	95% Conf. Upper
In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to maintain a strong working	Eq. Var. assume	5.616	.021	-1.040	62	.302	-.1250	.1202	-.3653	.1153

relationships with school faculty and staff?	Eq. Var. not assumed	-	32.7	.248	-	.106	-	.0911
		1.177	7		.125	2	.3411	
		3			0			

Table 4.3 summarizes survey question #12 independent sample *t*-test which is proved to be insignificant (with *p*-values ranging from .248 - .908), when comparing responses from Middle School Principals and combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Principals. With further analysis, the Levene's Test for Equality of Variance failed in regard to the question #12, In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to maintain a strong working relationship with school faculty and staff? Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was found to be violated for the present analysis, $F(1,62) = 5.61, p = .02$. A complete summary of the analysis is found in appendix B.

Table 4.4 *T-Test - Principal Opinions to Levels of Importance and Levels of Preparedness Within Respective Domains Deemed Necessary to Support Organizational Structures and the Education of Students.*

Level	School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q 15 Important	Middle School	47	2.6170	.49137	.07167
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	2.6250	.61914	.15478
Q15 Prepared	Middle School	26	2.1923	.40192	.07882

	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	7	2.1429	.37796	.14286
Q 16 Important	Middle School	47	2.5745	.49977	.07290
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	2.6875	.60208	.15052
Q16 Prepared	Middle School	26	2.3462	.62880	.12332
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	7	2.2857	.48795	.18443
Q 17 Important	Middle School	47	2.6809	.47119	.06873
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	2.6875	.60208	.15052
Q17 Prepared	Middle School	26	2.3846	.57110	.11200
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	7	2.0000	.57735	.21822
Q 18 Important	Middle School	47	2.7021	.46227	.06743
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	15	2.8667	.35187	.09085
Q18 Prepared	Middle School	26	2.3077	.54913	.10769
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	8	2.2500	.46291	.16366

In the survey 4 questions pertained to the role of the principal with respect to what they determined to be important and the respective level of preparedness to specific indicators in educating the middle level student. Table 4.4 captures questions

numbered 15, 16, 17, and 18 asked surveyors to assess the importance level and related preparedness on each task. Middle School, and Junior High School and Junior Senior High School Principals identified that providing an environment that is safe, inviting, inclusive and that addressed the developmental needs of students to be the most important with a mean respectively of 2.7021 and 2.8667. With respect to preparedness, Middle School Principals identified being most prepared to develop organizational structures that ensure students feel cared for and valued with a mean of 2.3846. Junior High School and Junior -Senior High School Principals identified being most prepared in promoting the relationships between teachers, parents, staff and students with a mean of 2.2857.

The task was followed by Middle School Principals finding importance with developing organizational structures that ensure students feel cared for and valued with a mean of 2.6809. Junior High and Junior-Senior High School Principals found importance equally in promoting the development of relationships between teachers, parents, staff and students along with developing organizational structures that ensure students feel cared for and valued with a respective mean for each of 2.6875.

The importance of Middle School Principals in promoting the development of relationships between teachers, parents, staff and students was valued as the least important task in the survey with a mean of 2.5745. Junior High and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated the least important task in the survey with respect to understanding the specific intellectual, physical, social, and psychological characteristics of students with a mean of 2.6250. Middle School Principals indicated they are least prepared to understand the specific intellectual, physical, social, and psychological

characteristics of students with a mean of 2.1923. Junior High and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated they are least prepared to develop organizational structures that ensure students feel cared for and valued with a mean of 2.0000.

A series of independent samples *t*-tests proved to be insignificant (with *p*-values ranging from .156 - .964), when comparing responses from Middle School Principals and Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Principals. With further analysis, the Levene's Test for Equality of Variance failed in regard to the question, @18importance. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was found to be violated for the present analysis, $F(1,62) = 9.41, p = .03$.

Table 4.5 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage of Essential Organization Structures (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Types(s) of Organizational Structure	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
46. Which of the following organizational school structures is most important to you as an administrator?	Advisory	3	2	5
	All - Teaming, Common Planning and Advisory	18	2	20
	Both teaming and common planning are important; we presently do not run any advisory program	1	0	1

	Common Planning	17	6	23
	Teaming	8	6	14
	Teaming and common planning	1	0	1
Total		48	16	64

Table 4.5, thirty-eight percent of Middle School Principals indicated that organizational structures of teaming, common planning and advisory are important, followed by 35% indicating common planning and 17% teaming. Combined results for Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated that 38% emphasized that common planning and teaming are important, followed by 13% indicating that advisory is deemed important.

Table 4.6 *ANOVA – Analysis of Middle School Support Beliefs (Strongly Agree; Somewhat Agree; Somewhat Disagree; Strongly Disagree).*

Descriptives		
Gen. reflection avg	Middle School	Maximum 4.00
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	4.00
	Total	4.00
ANOVA		
Gen. reflection_avg	Between Groups	Sig. .512
	Within Groups	
	Total	

Table 4.6 details a One-Way Analysis of Variance (*ANOVA*) was conducted to compare the difference among the groups consisting of Middle School Principals and Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Principals. There was an insignificant

difference among the groups, ($F(1, 63) = .434, P = .512$). The insignificance of the analysis is attributed to the similar values in the mean (Middle School Mean = 3.3 vs Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Mean = 3.4).

Research Question 2

What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of teaming to support students in the secondary school setting?

Table 4.7 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage for Teaming Taking Place in Middle School and Junior High and Junior Senior High Schools (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
19. Does your school use teaming?	No	3	4	7
	Yes	45	12	57
Total		48	16	64

As seen in table 4.7, ninety-four percent of middle schools use teaming while 75% of junior high and junior-senior high schools use teaming.

Table 4.8 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage for the Type of Teaming Taking Place in Middle School and Junior High and Junior-Senior High School (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Type of Teaming	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
20. What type(s) of teaming? Please select all that apply.		0	1	1
	Interdisciplinary	16	2	18

Interdisciplinary, Multiple Grade Level	1	0	1
Interdisciplinary, Single Grade Level	12	0	12
Interdisciplinary, Single Grade Level. Multiple Grade Level	2	0	2
Multiple Grade Level	3	3	6
Not Applicable	0	1	1
Other	2	2	4
Single Grade Level	9	7	16
Single Grade Level, Multiple Grade Level	1	0	1
Single Grade Level, Teacher Selective Teams Based on Own Desires (Becomes a Scheduled Time Period)	1	0	1
We are a Small School so Teaming isn't Necessary as we all Work Closely Together	1	0	1
Total	48	16	64

The data observed in table 4.8 indicates that 33% of middle school principals reported that their respective schools have interdisciplinary teaming followed by 25% reported in having interdisciplinary – single grade teaming. Junior high and junior-senior high school principals indicated 44% in having single grade level teaming, followed by 19% with multiple grade level teaming.

Table 4.9 Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage for Grade Level(s) Where Teaming Takes Place in Middle School and Junior High and Junior Senior High School (N = 64).

Survey Question	Grade Level(s)	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
21. In what grade level(s) does teaming occur? Please select all that apply.	Grade 6	0 9	1 1	1 10
	Grade 6-7	5	2	7
	Grades 6-8	28	3	31
	Grades 6-9	0	1	1
	Grade 7	1	2	3
	Grade 7-8	4	4	8
	Grade 9	0	1	1
	Not Applicable	1	1	2
Total		48	16	64

It was found in table 4.9 that in middle school, teaming takes place in grades 6-8 representing 58%, followed by 19% responding that teaming takes place exclusively in grade 6. In junior high and junior-senior high school, teaming occurs in grades 7 and 8, representing 25%, followed by 19% taking place in grades 6-8.

Table 4.10 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage for Random Assignment of Students to Team in Middle School and Junior High and Junior Senior High School (N = 62).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
22. Are students randomly assigned to teams?	No	14	6	20
	Yes	32	7	39
	Not Applicable	1	2	3
Total		47	15	62

The data indicated in table 4.10 shows that two principals did not respond to the question. Sixty-eight percent of middle school principals indicated that students are randomly assigned to teams, whereas 47% of junior high and junior senior high school principals indicated that students are randomly assigned to teams in their respective buildings.

Table 4.11 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage for Students Teamed with Same Group of Students Throughout Middle School (N = 63)*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
23. Do students remain teamed	No	41	9	50

with the same group of students throughout middle school?				
	Yes	6	5	11
	Not Applicable	1	1	2
Total		48	15	63

Based upon the information in table 4.11, one principal selected not to respond to the question. Eighty-five percent of middle school and 60% of junior high and junior-senior high school principals indicated that students do not remain teamed with the same students throughout their middle school experience.

Table 4.12 Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage Indicating if the Type of Teaming Structure has been Changed or Altered (N = 63).

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
24. Has the type of teaming structure utilized been changed or altered during your time as a principal?	No	27	9	36
	Yes	21	5	26
	Not Applicable	0	1	1
Total		48	15	63

As evidenced in table 4.12, one principal selected not to respond. It is indicative for both middle school and junior high and junior-senior high school principals that the

type of teaming structure utilized has not been changed nor altered during their time as principal. This is indicated respectively, 56% and 60% in responding.

Table 4.13 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Percentage Indicative for Interest in Modifying or Changing Teaming Structure (N = 63).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
25. Are you looking to modify or change the current teaming structure in your school?	No	41	10	51
	Yes	6	4	10
	Not Applicable	1	1	2
Total		48	15	63

Based upon information in table 4.13, one principal selected not to respond to the question. It is clear that both middle school and junior high and junior senior high school principals do not wish to modify nor change their respective teaming structure as evidenced respectively by 85% and 67% responding.

Table 4.14 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Qualitative Responses from Principal's Indicative to their Rationale to Modify or Change the Teaming Structure at their Respective Institutions.*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
26. Why are you either looking or not looking to modify or change the		16	3	19

current teaming structure in your school?				
Budgetary constraints	1	0	1	
District pressure / a scheduling constraints (addition of singletons and ENL needs are making it difficult to balance student schedules.	1	0	1	
It works well, no change needed.	11	0	11	
Length of school day limits modification / pure teaming only in grade 6.	1	0	1	
Through acceleration in math and science, teaming has been negatively impacted.	0	1	1	
Total	30	4	34	

As evidenced in the responses gathered in table 4.14; with a complete analysis in appendix C of supplemental data (4.14), principals acknowledged some of the following factors in maintaining the current structure as well as in creating some barriers to make change. Responses shared incorporate, budgetary constraints; scheduling constraints; length of school day in limiting modifications; the structure works well; concern with special education and ELL students; and the acceleration in math and science having an impact on teaming.

Table 4.15 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage of Staff Members Assigned to Teams (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Staff on Team	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
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27. Which staff members are assigned to a team?	All core academic teachers (math, science, English and social studies)	46	11	57
	English teacher	1	2	3
	Not applicable as teaming is not an organizational structure in my school.	1	2	3
	Special Education teachers	0	1	1
Total		48	16	64

Table 4.15 identifies that 96% of middle school and 69% of junior high and junior-senior high school principals have all four core teachers, inclusive of mathematics, science, English, and social studies teachers on a team.

Table 4.16 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Academic Teachers Assigned to a Team (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Teachers on Team	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
28. On average, how many academic (math, science, English, social studies) teachers are assigned to a team?	2 teachers	1	1	2
	3 teachers	7	3	10
	4 teachers	31	8	39
	5 teachers	5	2	7
	Greater than 5 teachers	3	0	3

	None	1	2	3
Total		48	16	64

For both middle school and junior high and junior-senior high school principals responding, it is indicative in table 4.16 that both types of instructional settings (middle school, 65% and junior high and junior-senior high school, 50%) have four teachers on grade level teams. The data further indicates that 15% of middle school principals have teams of 3 teachers and 10% with 5 teachers on respective teams. For junior high and junior-senior high schools, the data indicates that 19% have 3 teachers on a team and 13% having 5 teachers on respective teams.

Table 4.17 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage of Students Fully Teamed (N = 63).*

Survey Question	% Students Teamed	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
29. On average, what percentage of students would be considered fully teamed in your school?	0%	3	2	5
	25%	3	3	6
	50%	2	0	2
	75%	14	7	21
	100%	25	4	29
Total		47	16	63

Table 4.17 indicates that one respondent selected not to respond. Fifty-three percent of middle school principals indicated that 100% of their students are fully teamed in their respective school, followed by 30% of their students are fully teamed. In

the junior high and junior-senior high school setting, 25% have 100% of their students fully teamed, followed by 44% with 75% of their students fully teamed.

Table 4.18 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage of Teams That Have a Team Facilitator or Leader (N= 64).*

Survey Question	Team Facilitator or Leader	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
30. Does each team have a team facilitator or team leader?	No	30	8	38
	Yes	17	6	23
	Not Applicable	1	2	3
Total		48	16	64

It is evidenced in table 4.18 with 63% of middle school principals and 50% of junior high and junior-senior high school principals responding that teams in both settings do not have a team facilitator nor leader.

Table 4.19 *ANOVA - Analysis on Teaming Beliefs Per Question (Strongly Agree; Somewhat Agree; Somewhat Disagree; Strongly Agree).*

Descriptives			
Teaming avg		Maximum	
	Middle School	4.00	
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	4.00	
	Total	4.00	
Teaming avg		Sig.	
	Between Groups	.452	
	Within Groups		
	Total		

Table 4.19 shows another One-Way Analysis of Variance (*ANOVA*) was conducted to compare the difference among the groups consisting of Middle School Principals and Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Principals. There was

an insignificant difference among the groups, ($F(1, 59) = .573, P = .452$). The insignificance of the analysis is attributed to the similar values in the mean (Middle School Mean = 3.2 vs Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Mean = 3.3).

Research Question 3

What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of common planning to support students in the secondary school setting?

Table 4.20 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis on Common Planning in School Settings (N= 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
32. Does your school have common planning time?	No	3	2	5
	Yes	45	14	59
Total		48	16	64

It is evidenced in table 4.20 with 94% of Middle School Principals and 88% of combined Junior High and Junior-Senior High School Principals responding that their schools have common planning time.

Table 4.21 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis on Common Planning in all grade levels (N= 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
33. Does time for common planning occur in all grades?	No	7	8	15
	Yes	40	8	48
	Not Applicable	1	0	1
Total		48	16	64

As observed in Table 4.21, one responded stated not applicable while 83% of Middle School Principals and 50% of combined Junior High and Junior-Senior High School Principals responded that time for common planning occurs in all grades.

Table 4.22 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Frequency of Team Common Planning (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
34. How often does team common planning occur?	Daily	31	6	37
	Every other day	6	4	10
	None	2	2	4
	Once a month	1	0	1
	Once a week	8	4	12
Total		48	16	64

Table 4.22 indicates that 65% of Middle School Principals and 38% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals have daily common planning time. Followed by 13% and 25% respectively, have every other day common planning time; 4% and 13% respectively, have no common planning time; and 17% and 25% respectively, have common planning time only once a week.

In appendix D supplemental data (4.23) is detailed. It evidences that 63% of Middle School Principals and 58% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated that common planning time is used for teacher preparation. Fifty-five percent of Middle School Principals and 50% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals found that coordination of instruction takes place during common planning time. Fifty-seven percent of Middle School Principals and 42% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals found that teachers create assessments during common planning time. Followed by, 56% of Middle School Principals and 50% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals found that teachers discuss students; 49% of Middle School Principals and 50% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals found that teachers conduct conferences; 63% of Middle School Principals and 50% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals found that teachers plan special events such as field trips; and 44% of Middle School Principals and 75% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals found teachers use common planning time to attend 504 and IEP meetings.

Table 4.24 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis for Grade Level Common Planning (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
36. Does grade level common planning occur?	No	8	7	15
	Yes	40	9	49

Total	48	16	64
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Table 4.24 shows evidence that grade level common planning occurs as indicated by 83% Middle School Principals and 56% of Combined Junior High and Junior-Senior High School Principals responding.

Table 4.25 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis for Changes Grade Level Common Planning (N = 62).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
37. Has the common planning structure been changed or altered during your time as principal?	No	29	10	39
	Yes	16	6	22
	Not Applicable	1	0	1
Total		46	16	62

Two respondents selected not to respond to information requested in Table 4.25. It has been determined with 63% of Middle School Principals and with 63% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals responding that there has been no change to the structure of common planning time in their respective schools.

Table 4.26 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics –Analysis to Assess Modifications or Changes to Structure of Common Planning.*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Explanation	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
38. Are you looking to modify or change the current common planning structure? If yes, please explain.			27	6	33
	No		13	5	18
	Yes	Add planning time	0	1	1
		Develop more time for interdisciplinary common planning.	1	0	1
		District is exploring a 9 period day.	1	0	1
		Due to limitations of the master schedule, unable to have a common planning period.	0	1	1
		Focus on course and subject.	0	1	1
		Modifications due to ICT & ENL co-teaching where planning is needed.	1	0	1
		Not all teachers are available for common planning. Looking to change the master schedule to allow all teachers to participate.	1	0	1

To develop time for teacher to plan common assessments and PBL projects.	0	1	1
We have had it run after school and before school.	1	0	1
Would like to have common planning time by department and grade level – tough with scheduling.	1	0	1
Current model does not maximize effectiveness of common planning time as scheduled.	1	0	1
Would like to build in additional planning time.	1	0	1
Total	48	16	64

Table 4.26 captures qualitative (open-ended) responses received from respondents with Middle School Principals reporting the following: Developing more time for interdisciplinary planning; Exploring the option of a 9 period day; ICT and ENL co-teaching common planning; Current structure works effectively; Not all teachers can attend common planning, as a result investigating in taking a look at the master schedule to make necessary modifications; Common planning runs prior to and after school; Would like to offer common planning time by department and grade level, difficult to accommodate with the master schedule; and additional planning time is needed. Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals reported the following: A need to add planning time; As a result to the limitations with the schedule,

there is no common planning time; Planning takes place within academic courses; and
Need to develop time for teachers for common assessments and PBL assignments.

Table 4.27 *ANOVA – Analysis on Common Planning Beliefs (Strongly Agree; Somewhat Agree; Somewhat Disagree; Strongly Disagree).*

Descriptives		
Common Planning avg	Middle School	Maximum 4.00
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	4.00
	Total	4.00
Common Planning avg	Between Groups	Sig. .833
	Within Groups	
	Total	

Table 4.27 shows another One-Way Analysis of Variance (*ANOVA*) was conducted to compare the difference among the groups consisting of Middle School Principals and Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Principals. There was an insignificant difference among the groups, ($F(1, 63) = .045, P = .833$). The insignificance of the analysis is attributed to the similar values in the mean (Middle School Mean = 3.4 vs Combined Junior-Senior and Junior High School Mean = 3.4).

Research Question 4

What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of an advisory program to support students in the secondary school setting?

Table 4.28 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis on Advisory in School Settings (N= 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
40. Does your school have an	No	26	10	36

advisory period for students?				
	Yes	22	6	28
Total		48	16	64

As detailed in table 4.28, fifty-four percent of Middle School Principals and 63% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals responding indicated they do not have an advisory structure in their respective schools.

Table 4.29 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis on School Schedule Accommodating Time for Advisory (N= 61).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
41. Does the school day schedule accommodate the purpose of a designated and defined advisory time for students?	No	15	5	20
	Yes	23	7	30
	Not Applicable	8	3	11
Total		46	15	61

Table 4.29 shows evidence that three respondents to the survey did not respond to this question. Fifty percent of Middle School Principals and 47% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated that provisions are in place in their respective buildings to accommodate a designated time for advisory.

Table 4.30 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis by Grade Level for Advisory (N= 64).*

Survey Question	Grade	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
42. If your school has advisory, what grades are provided with this organizational structure?		1	1	2
	Grade 7	0	1	1
	Grade 8	1	0	1
	Grades 6-7	3	0	3
	Grades 6-8	16	3	19
	Grades 7-8	2	2	4
	Not Offered	25	9	34
Total		48	16	64

As indicated by table 4.30, Middle School Principals identified that 52% do not offer advisory, followed by 33% offering advisory in grades 6-8 and 6% offering the advisory structure only in grades 6 and 7. For Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals, 56% do not offer advisory, followed by 19% offering advisory in grades 6-8 and 13% offering advisory in grades 7-8.

Table 4.31 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics –Frequency and Percentage Purpose of Advisory through the Lens of the Building Principal (N = 64).*

Principal Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	3	4.7	4.7
A time for students to decompress and engage in social activities.	2	3.1	7.8
All of the above	36	56.3	64.1
None of the above	7	10.9	75.0
To guide students with an adult mentor	1	1.6	76.6
To provide structured time for students to complete homework	1	1.6	78.1

To support social and emotional development	14	21.9	100.0
Total	64	100	

Table 4.31 indicates that 56% of the respondents reported that the purpose of advisory is inclusive of a time for students to decompress and engage in social activities; to guide students with an adult mentor, to provide structured time for students to complete homework; and to support social and emotional development. Twenty-one percent of the respondents indicated that the purpose of advisory is to support the social and emotional development of students. Two percent of the respondents followed by indicating that the least important purpose of advisory was to guide students with an adult mentor and to provide structured time for students to complete homework.

Table 4.32 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Duration of Advisory (N = 64).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
44. On average, for what length of time does advisory occur?		1	1	2
	20-minute block of time daily	13	1	14
	A designated period daily	6	2	8
	A designated time weekly	3	3	6
	No designation of time given	8	3	11
	Not Applicable	17	6	23
Total		48	16	64

Table 4.32 found that Middle School Principals responded with 35% indicating not applicable, followed by 27% designating a 20-minute block of time daily; 17% indicating no designation of time given; and 13% indicating a designated period daily

for advisory. Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals similar to Middle School Principals indicated with 38% the question was not applicable, followed by 19% indicating a designated time weekly as well as equally responding no designation of time given towards an advisory structure and concluding with 13% indicating a designated period daily for advisory.

Table 4.33 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis for Changes in Advisory Structure (N = 61).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
45. Has the advisory structure been altered or changed during your time as principal?	No	24	8	32
	Not Applicable	23	6	29
Total		47	14	61

Table 4.33 indicates that three respondents to the survey did not respond. Fifty-one percent of Middle School Principals and 57% of Combined Junior High School and Junior-Senior High School Principals indicated that the advisory structure has not been altered or changed during their tenure as principal.

Summary

In chapter 4 the findings of the four research questions within the study were discussed. The first research question asked about the essential leadership qualities of secondary principals to support organizational structures to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations. The second research question asked about the principals' perceptions of

the organizational structure of teaming to support students in the secondary setting. The third research question asked about the principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of common planning to support students in the secondary setting. The final research question asked about the principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of an advisory program to support students in the secondary setting.

An online self-administered survey was provided to 137 Long Island secondary principals. A determined effort was made through four different electronic letters of solicitation where an analysis of the data was received from 64 respondents, representing a 47% response rate obtained. The analysis of data collected depicted responses to questions on instructional leadership, teaming, common planning and advisory programs in the middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school learning environment. The principals responding to the survey have been in the field of education 16 or more years in representing 72% of participants with ages within the range of 40-49 years of age holding the position of principal between 0-10 years. Conclusions were able to be drawn from the analysis of the survey data aligned with my research questions which will further be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS, CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter 4 was a presentation of data from the survey instrument. The data were analyzed and tables were created to discuss the findings of the research. In chapter 5, further discussion and interpretation of the data are discussed tied to the research questions and the literature. Summarization to the purpose, methodology and findings to the study are presented. Conclusions along with implications and recommendations for future research are discussed.

The purpose of this study was to provide a descriptive profile to determine the secondary principal's perspective to their role; in addition, to their perception of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as essential middle school priorities to prepare students to achieve, acclimate and be successful upon entering high school. The principals' views allowed the researcher to present a distinctive set of data that may address the gap in the research literature on teaming, common planning an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level.

The middle school concept is a philosophy of education with a special spirit and with deep theoretical roots – a set of beliefs about kids, education, and the human experience. The concept's ideals and recommendations are direct reflections of its two prime foundations, the nature and needs of young adolescents and the accepted principles of learning, both undergirded by a commitment to our democratic way of life (Lounsbury, 2009). In recognizing such indicators, it is essential for schools to provide

appropriate structures to meet such unique student needs to engage, acclimate, organize, guide, support, establish relationships, and enrich students as they progress through their educational years. Supporters of the middle school philosophy promoted schools that were developmentally responsible and responsive. As such, structures and concepts such as teaming, advisory, student-centered learning, and integrated curricula became the cornerstones of such schooling models (Yoon et al., 2015).

This study was limited to organizational structures of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program implemented to students in middle school; specific to grades six through eight. Teaming and common planning time play a critical role in providing teachers with the opportunity to interact with one another to meet the needs of students, the teachers clearly acknowledge its importance in contributing to the professional atmosphere (Cook et al., 2016). Advisory groups provide students' social, emotional, and moral growth (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996). Effective transition programs address the academic and procedural concerns of students, as well as their very real social concerns (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006). When the middle school concept is implemented substantially over time, student achievement, including measures by standardized tests, rises, and substantial improvement in fulfilling the other broader, more enduring goals of education results (Lounsbury, 2009).

There are unique qualities of leadership specific to the role of the middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school principal to ensure the appropriate implementation to organizational structures of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as vehicles to support the overall educational development of students in middle school and beyond. Leadership is the key variable impacting and determining

organizational performance and success as leaders develop a vision for change and influence others to share their vision (McFarlane, 2010).

Data collected aligns with concepts and beliefs relevant to the researcher's theoretical framework specific to Situational Leadership Theory. Specific to the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model, the theory identifies that a good leader will be able to adjust their leadership to the goal of the objective to be accomplished. For a leader to be successful the leader must be capable to establish goals, have a capacity to assume responsibility, be educated and have experience. In addition, the Vroom-Yetton Model indicates that every manager needs to be able to make good decisions and adapt to different challenges. This model, as supported by the data received allows the leader to identify the best decision-making approach and leadership style to take based upon a select situation. Based upon the theories explored, principals are expected to take more active roles in ensuring their staff have an opportunity to participate in decisions and actions in curriculum and instructional development and planning. Research has shown that a school's effectiveness in the promotion of student learning was found to be the product of building wide, unified effort dependent on quality leadership. It is through effective leadership that essential personnel are pulled together for successful planning to achieve a desired goal. Therefore, the principal must know the mission to be accomplished and the best procedure available to accomplish this mission to be successful in the work (Pashiardis, 1993).

The findings draw attention to the alignment with the researcher's conceptual framework specific to leadership encompassing components of organization, communication, planning, support and decision making. As such structures are

encompassed, it is equally important for the leader to reflect upon the school culture, setting, academics, puberty, anxiety and responsibility of students and stakeholders to make a well-informed decision leading to organizational outcomes supportive to teaming, common planning and use of an advisory structure to support and reinforce learning for the secondary student to achieve and be successful.

The study may provide secondary administrators, superintendents, boards of education, legislatures and the New York State Department of Education with further insight and direction regarding organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in the education of students in secondary education under their leadership.

Demographic Findings

Across Long Island, 137 surveys were sent out to Long Island school secondary principals. There were 64 secondary principals who responded to the survey. The participants represented Nassau and Suffolk Counties middle school principals, junior high school principals and junior-senior high school principals.

The majority of respondents (45%) to the survey represented 29 and more years of experience in any role in education with 75% reporting being middle school principals in grades 6-8.

For years of experience in their current administrative position, 41% percent of the principals were within their first five years of experience. Thirty percent of the principals were between 6 and 10 years, 19% were between 11 and 15 years, 9% were between 16 and 20 years, 2% were between 21 and 25 years of experience. The

majority of principals had fewer than 5 years of experience as a secondary principal followed by 30% having 6 to 10 years of experience.

The gender distribution for principals was predominantly male. Male principals represented 63% of the results with 40 respondents and females represented 36% of the results with 23 respondents. The majority of principals, 48%, who responded to the survey fell in the 40-49 age range. Only 25% fell in the 50-59 age range followed by 22% that fell in the 30-39 age range. In the 60-69 age range, principals represented 3% followed by the 21-29 age range, representing 2%.

Analysis of highest degree earned, it was found that 80% of respondents have a masters and advanced graduate certificate and 17% have a doctorate. Three percent responded in having a master's degree.

Majority of the respondents, 56%, are principals of schools with enrollments in the 450-899 range of students attending followed by 30% having enrollments of 900 students or larger. Eight percent of the respondents have enrollments of 249 and below followed by 6% having student enrollment in the 250 – 449 range. As for school location of respondents to the survey, the majority (94%) indicated suburban, followed by 3% equally representing rural and urban locations.

Discussion

Research Question 1

What are the essential leadership qualities of Long Island secondary school principals in order to support organizational structures, deemed essential, to advance students acclimating socially and emotionally in learning and preparedness for secondary level expectations?

Regarding the essential leadership qualities of principals, the data indicated that the sample of principals representing both middle school and combined junior high and junior-senior high school setting valued maintaining a strong working relationship with the school faculty and staff as the most important function in leadership. Owens (2004), addressed that the major theme in organizational theory has been the interaction between organizational structure and people. In support of the data, leadership is a phenomenon that occurs when one influences the direction people are going and unites them toward accomplishing a common goal (Stoner, 2016).

It followed by middle school principals perception of instructional leadership while junior high school and junior-senior high school principals perceived instructional leadership along with meaningful and relevant professional development as important. According to McFarlane (2010), leadership is central in school improvement processes because almost everything depends on leadership and especially the prevailing district culture and school climate that develop over time as leadership practices affect the behaviors of principals, teachers, staff, and students. It was not determined based upon the data for the principal in either setting to prioritize the importance of being current with organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in educating secondary students. As schools strive for effective decision making, the role of the school principal is that of the orchestrator in the processes of participatory decision making. The principal must be aware of the objectives to be accomplished by group decisions and must be knowledgeable in the various group decision-making models available. Effective schools research suggests that the principal's leadership is the most important factor in the school's performance (Pashiardis, 1993).

Respondents in both learning environments expressed importance in providing an environment for students where they are safe, inviting, inclusive and addresses the developmental needs of students. This has been confirmed in the research in that establishing a safe and secure learning environment and a positive, nurturing school climate are merely the first steps in a long series of critically high expectations effective principals set for themselves, as well as for the educational communities they lead (Cotton, 2004).

With respect to preparation, middle school principals identified being most prepared to develop organizational structures that ensure students feel cared for and valued while junior high school and junior-senior high school principals identified being most prepared in promoting the relationships between teachers, parents, staff and students. This is confirmed in that principals must make these decisions while focusing on the situation and understanding how a decision should be made, as evidenced by the Vroom-Yetton model of decision making. Middle grade literature suggests that effective principals should understand and advocate for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organizational structures that meet young adolescent developmental needs, such as shared leadership, scheduling, and structures that promote student and teacher collaboration and real-life learning activities (Bickmore, 2016).

Middle school principals identified that the organizational structures of teaming, common planning and advisory as being important to them as administrators. While analyzing each organizational structure independently, it was found by middle school principals that the organizational structure of teaming was the least important. Junior high school and junior-senior high school principals indicated that both common

planning and teaming to be important, while the least important being advisory. The conceptual framework used in the research of the soccer ball, when used by students to play soccer; similar to the work of the building principal, is considerate to the ideals of decision making, planning, organization, communication, innovation and more.

Advocates for middle grades education suggest that principals are critical to the implementation of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organizational structures that meet young adolescent needs (Bickmore, 2016).

Leithwood et al., (2006) explored the literature on successful school leadership and found four common core practices: setting direction; developing people; redesigning the organization; and managing the instructional (teaching and learning) program (as cited in Sanzo, Sherman, & Clayton, 2011). As cited by the National Middle School Association (NMSA, 2010), research on effective leadership and organization comprises three broad categories: (1) professional development for teachers, (2) professional learning communities among teachers, and (3) the role of the instructional leader.

Research Question 2

What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of teaming to support students in the secondary school setting?

It was evidenced in the survey data that both middle school and junior high school and junior-senior high school principals have teaming in their respective buildings. Furthermore, it was found that in both learning environments, interdisciplinary teaming was found. As stated by Mertens & Flowers (2004), an interdisciplinary team is comprised of a group of teachers from different subject areas who teach the same group of students, creating a small unit within a larger school (as

cited in Haverback & Mee, 2013). Grades 6-8 were found to be teamed in the middle school setting while in both of the junior high school and junior-senior high school setting, teaming was found in grades 6-7. It is assumed and confirmed by the data that in the junior high and junior-senior high school settings teaming would not take place in grade 9 as in most instances there are distinct levels of learning spanning core curricula areas and constraints with scheduling.

Respondents indicated that the majority of students are randomly assigned to a team and students that are teamed do not remain with the same students on a team during their middle school experience. Principals for both environments indicated that the teaming structure has not been changed nor altered during their tenure as principal and furthermore have no intention of looking to institute a change in structure. Rationale principals gave for not make changes in the given structure of teaming were based upon budgetary and scheduling constraints, the length of the school day, concern with accommodating special education and ELL students, and acceleration in math and science.

The position statement of the National Middle Schools Association (NMSA), *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), notes that interdisciplinary teaming and common planning time are essential elements of organizational structure at the middle grade level. The statement maintains that effective middle schools need grade level teams of teachers who have clearly delineated time to discuss student needs and issues. NMSA (2010), calls for schools that promote purposeful and meaningful learning and maintains that a school's organization, which includes interdisciplinary teams and common planning time, has a significant impact on

student achievement (Haverback & Mee, 2013). Both middle school and junior high and junior-senior high school principals indicated that four core teachers comprise a team; inclusive to mathematics, science, English and social studies. Furthermore, respondents indicated that at the middle school level, the majority of students are fully teamed while at the junior high school and junior-senior high school level 25% of the students are teamed. This might be contributed to IEP accommodations, double performers in music, acceleration in math and/or science and elective based course opportunities. In addition, it was found that in both settings, teams did not have a team facilitator.

Research Question 3

What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of common planning to support students in the secondary school setting?

The majority of the respondents indicated that in both the middle school and combined junior high and junior-senior high school settings that common planning time is structured for teachers on a daily basis.

The data evidenced that in both secondary settings, common planning time is used by teachers for preparation and the coordination of instruction. Followed by teachers crafting assessments, discussion of students, conferences, special events and field trips and meeting on students for 504 and IEP mandates. This complements the intended outcomes as addressed through the *Great Schools Partnership* (The Glossary of Educational Reform) in that common planning time for teachers sets the improved coordination and communication that occurs among teachers who meet and talk regularly; learning, insights and constructive feedback offered during professional

discussions among teachers; and the lessons, units, materials, and resources that are created or improved when teachers work on them collaboratively.

The majority of respondents indicated that common planning takes place with teachers in their respective schools and the structure of common planning has remained unchanged during their tenure as principal. The data found, contradicts the findings of Cook & Faulkner (2010), who stated that causes for the ineffective use of common planning time is as the result to lack of a clearly defined purpose or agenda and the effort to accomplish too many varied tasks within the scope of the time allocated. Furthermore, this data contradicts the research of Thompson, Franz & Miller (2009), (as cited in Haverback & Mee, 2013) in professing that many schools struggle with common planning time with a lack of teacher buy-in and principal leadership.

For respondents indicating the desire to modify or change their current common planning structure, the rationale given was aligned with development of additional time for interdisciplinary planning, exploring the option of a nine period day, to establish ICT and ENL co-teaching common planning, not being conducive for all teachers to attend common planning, common planning taking place either prior to or at the conclusion of the day, offering common planning by department and grade level, and constraints with the master schedule. As Haverback and Mee (2013) determined, the most common barrier to common planning time was captured by teachers who believed they did not have enough time to achieve their goals. Furthermore, they address the benefit of common planning time may be difficult to measure objectively and reliably.

Research Question 4

What are secondary principals' perceptions of the organizational structure of an advisory program to support students in the secondary school setting?

The majority of the respondents addressed they do not have an advisory program in middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school settings. This is confirmed by the research conducted by Spears (2005), advisory in practice has been unsuccessful. In 2001, only 48% of middle level schools reported having an advisory program in place. While this is a gain of 8% from 1988, it is evident from the data that the majority of middle schools have failed to implement advisory. For those settings that have an advisory program in their respective schools respondents indicated that time is scheduled daily to support this organizational structure. Spear (2005), addressed that advisory programs over the years have failed as a result to:

- Not sufficiently focused on specific goals and learnings;
- Lack sufficient support from the staff or district office;
- The plan and organization are insufficient;
- The groups don't meet often enough for the relationships to develop sufficiently to fulfill some program goals;
- They have insufficient leadership and supervision from the administration;
- They rely too much on a pre-packaged curriculum;
- Lack resources and materials;
- Lack initial or ongoing professional development.

The respondents to the survey in representing both middle school principals and junior high school and junior-senior high school principals reported that the purpose of

advisory is inclusive to support time for students to decompress and engage in social activities; to guide students with an adult mentor; to provide structured time for students to complete homework; and to support social and emotional development. The findings are in support of the research conducted by Niska (2013), in stating that discussion while in advisory typically focuses on students' academic, personal, and social concerns. It is further supported by Spears (2005), in stating that when students and advisors meet in advisory groups as compared to students who are not part of an advisory, the following positive influences are indicated. Students have lower ratings of school and academic daily stresses and social and peer daily stress; students have lower reports of depression, anxiety, and behavior problems; students have higher reports of academic efficacy, using distraction and refocusing coping practices, and using problem-solving coping practices; and teachers have higher ratings on overall positive school work climate, staff commitment, personal commitment to the middle school concept, and higher satisfaction with respect to intrinsic rewards, student behavior and parent and community support and involvement.

Conclusion

This chapter summarized the purpose, methodology and findings of the study. Limitations, recommendations for future practice and research and conclusions were discussed.

It is understood that middle school students experience aspects of anxiety, stress, lack of overall preparedness with respect to organizational skills and meeting objectives leading to academic success and achievement. This study provided a descriptive quantitative contour to the importance of building leadership and organizational

structures of common planning, teaming and an advisory concept as vehicles to support the education of secondary students.

As evidenced in the study, it is imperative for building leaders to have the capacity to prioritize, be organized, able to delegate, and know how to effectively lead in an ever changing learning environment. A priority of a building leader is to best support teachers as teachers prepare students to be successful in the 21st century and beyond. It is through their leadership that instructional leaders will approach instruction through an open mind, will be current with instructional best practices, and have a collaborative mindset to be receptive to organizational structures of common planning, teaming, and an advisory program to effectively prepare students to think critically, be able to communicate, problem solve, self-advocate, and be confident as they take part in the continuum of secondary learning.

It is through the conceptual framework of the secondary school principal that was illustrated and presented in this study, as strengthened by the use of the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model and the Vroom-Yetton Model, clearly depicting qualities of strong leadership. From the research in this study, it is evident for the secondary principal to have a method to be confident as a strong leader to make important and correct decisions. Decisions that are made in consultation with others that is consultative and collaboratively based will allow for better decisions when considering the appropriate organizational structures to institute within the school system to support the academic, social and emotional learning of students in the secondary setting. In understanding the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model, allows secondary principals with the confidence to place teachers in situations where

they will become successful based upon their capacity and perseverance to integrate desired organizational structures of teaming, common planning and an advisory program to assist them as educators as well as prepare students efficiently to achieve and acclimate in the secondary school environment.

The study analyzed results obtained from Long Island secondary principals of middle schools (specific to grades 6-8), junior high schools (specific to grades 7-8), and junior-senior high schools (specific to grades 7-8) on leadership, common planning, teaming and advisory. As evidenced in the study, secondary principals are prepared efficiently to ensure that students feel cared for and valued. Respondents to the survey clearly articulated that structures of common planning and teaming are instituted within their educational environments, but discrepant results indicate the lack of an advisory construct. The lack of infusing an advisory construct may result from the lack of administrative support, financial support, confidence of teachers to work with and coach students in a non-structured environment beyond the classroom and the confines of the instructional day. It is hopeful that this study will provide secondary administrators, superintendents, boards of education, legislatures and the New York State Department of Education with further insight and direction regarding organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory as viable considerations in order to support the overall education of students in secondary education.

The research and literature regarding middle school indicates that student learning is best supported when organizational structures of teaming, common planning, and advisory are inclusive within student learning and acclimated upon within the middle school setting. The need to conduct this study was clearly identified as presented

in the position paper of the Association for Middle Level Education, This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents. As addressed in this position paper, there is evidence to support the organizational structures of teaming, common planning, and advisory with meaningful and reflective leadership insight and support required to enhance the diverse and forward thinking of educating middle level students.

According to McFarlane (2010), leadership is central in school improvement processes because almost everything depends on leadership and especially the prevailing district culture and school climate that develop over time as leadership practices affect the behaviors of principals, teachers, staff, and students. It was evidenced in the research that effective, knowledgeable and insightful leadership is warranted to support the implementation and growth of organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory. Leadership is the key variable impacting and determining organizational performance and success as leaders develop a vision for change and influence others to share their vision (McFarlane, 2010). When the middle school concept is implemented substantially over time, student achievement, including measures by standardized tests, rises, and substantial improvement in fulfilling the other broader, more enduring goals of education results (Lounsbury, 2009).

Final Thoughts

There are many factors impacting administrators and teachers currently in having a potential adverse impact on educating students. Some of these factors may be tied to the teacher and administrative evaluation process of APPR, State assessments, accountability indicators, demographic shifts, an increase in educating English Language Learners, social media, the mental health needs of students and much more.

Educating students today is very different from educating students years ago as evidenced by how external components are having an influence on concerns of student and staff safety, socialization concerns of students, and the overall mental health of students.

Through my research and experience, there is clear evidence that common planning and teaming align and are integrated similarly as well as supported, but the advisory construct has raised some question for debate as schools have received resistance from teachers and their unions to infuse this practice effectively and efficiently to support students mental health, social needs and overall well-being. Questions still exist in the mind of the researcher as to the overall efficient use of common planning and teaming as structures to integrate cross curricula articulation, meaningful conversations regarding students and time to construct holistic assessments to measure overall student development. For institutions having an advisory construct, there is no clear evidence that such a structure has been implemented effectively by all to support students with an adult advocate trained to assess and support students mental health and well-being. Concern resonates that when the structure is not implemented appropriately and effectively, the structure resorts to a study hall in losing the focus and intent of the designed structural obligation.

It is my hope that the research conducted in this study will educate, influence and shift the mindset of administrators and teachers in middle level education to consider the effective implementation and use of organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory to support student learning and overall development of the middle level student. When such organizational structures are implemented effectively and

supported educationally, it is perceived to benefit the secondary teacher and most importantly the middle level student with confidence, consistency and support as they in prepare for secondary learning and beyond.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation to the study was found to exist in the format, structure and in the wording to some of the questions presented in the survey. Such that, some of the questions where not worded correctly to bring attention that multiple responses were warranted. Whereby, the targeted audience surveyed appeared to be misled in only providing a singular as opposed to a multiple response to select questions. The researcher uncovered that such survey questions were not responded to in full context in providing some discrepant data.

Another limitation to the study was with the sampling surveyed. The sample surveyed was limited to public school principals in Long Island, New York. Most specifically, limited to principals of buildings consisting of educating students in the middle school setting within buildings having a grade level configuration of a 6-8, 7-9 and 7-12 educational construct.

Sample size of secondary principals responding to the survey was a limitation to the study. A greater response rate of secondary principals to the survey may have yielded different results or may have provided more significant results of the principal's perception to the organizational structures of common planning, teaming and use of an advisory program in the middle school, junior-high school and junior-senior high school setting.

The researcher was unclear of the knowledge each respondent in the survey may have regarding school building leadership tied to organizational structures to support middle level education and the location of their school. Based upon an analysis of the data, it is uncertain that the respondents had a clear understanding to organizational structures of teaming, common planning and advisory constructs in educating students within the secondary school setting as well as having a clear distinction between an urban, rural and suburban environment.

Another threat to internal validity is location. The location of administrators surveyed was limited to Long Island, New York; specific to Suffolk and Nassau Counties. The results of the study may not be generalized to geographic areas outside of Long Island, New York and to principals serving non-public schools. The original survey instrument administered was designed with the purpose to study exclusive middle school instructional scheduling, teaming and common planning. Modifications were necessary to meet the needs of this study specific to the focus of leadership, teaming, common planning and advisory in secondary learning within the Long Island region.

Restricting the research study to being quantitative in design potentially restricted a more altruistic and accurate response to targeted questions in making valid conclusions.

A final limitation to be addressed was found in the structuring of select questions. Questions consisting of multiple parts (i.e. rating the importance and level of preparedness) was not perceived to be answered correctly, nor completely.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Additional research could be done on future implications of leadership, common planning, teaming and advisory in the role of the building principal. Survey secondary principals on how they perceive their role has evolved over time and the necessity to adapt or remain current to support student learning in the future. This study would also help to provide aspiring secondary principals with current research on how to prepare for the position in an ever-changing school climate.

This study may provide secondary administrators, superintendents, boards of education, legislatures and the New York State Department of Education with further insight and direction regarding organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in the education of students in secondary education under their leadership.

The State Education Department (SED) collects specific data from schools on a yearly basis inclusive of enrollment, average class size, free and reduced-price lunch, attendance, student suspensions, teacher qualifications, staff counts and assessment results. However, lacks to address the significance and related outcomes of organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory on student learning. Including this data will be pertinent to principals to support them in strengthening their leadership capacity to support the overall education of students in the secondary learning environment.

Recommendations for Future Research

A future recommendation for research would be to replicate this study across the entire State of New York. This study only included middle school, junior high school and junior-senior high school principals from Suffolk and Nassau Counties in Long Island, New York as a limitation to the data referenced. It would be insightful to assess how secondary school principals perceive the organizational structures as depicted in the study across the State to further assess similarities and differences in providing a full profile for administrators to reference.

Another recommendation would be to include teachers, assistant superintendents of curriculum, superintendents in the study. Teachers, assistant superintendents of curriculum and superintendents could bring about different perspectives to the study and allow for a greater understanding on the importance of leadership impacting the organizational structures of common planning, teaming and advisory on the education of secondary students.

Recreating this study to include a mixed method approach inclusive of qualitative data would be advantageous to address a more in-depth analysis and understanding of response data in making valid conclusions.

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Appendix A

Supplemental data 4.2 *T-Test Opinions of Instructional Leaders Levels of Importance Necessary to Support Organizational Structures (N = 64).*

Survey Question	School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
9. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to be an instructional leader?	Middle School	48	4.625	.4892	.0706
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.563	.6292	.1573
10. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to be current with organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in educating secondary students?	Middle School	48	4.521	.5454	.0787
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.500	.8165	.2041
11. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to have a thorough understanding of all State policies and procedures?	Middle School	48	4.250	.7579	.1094
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.313	.8732	.2183

12. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to maintain a strong working relationship with school faculty and staff?	Middle School	48	4.750	.4376	.0632
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.875	.3416	.0854
13. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to assess teachers for their educational beliefs, values and practices?	Middle School	48	4.438	.6156	.0889
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.250	.8563	.2141
14. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to provide him/herself with meaningful and relevant professional development to enhance their personal professional knowledge?	Middle School	48	4.542	.5035	.0727
	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	16	4.563	.5123	.1281

Appendix B

Independent Sample Test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances t-test for Equality of Means								
Q	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.2-t	M diff	Std. Er Diff (L)	95% Conf (U)
Equal variances assumed								
9	2.447	.123	.411	62	.0625	.1520	-.2413	.3663
Equal variances not assumed								
9			.363	21.37	.0625	.1724	-.2957	.4207
Equal variances assumed								
10	1.740	.192	.116	62	.0208	.1795	-.3380	.3797
Equal variances not assumed								
10			.095	19.65	.0208	.2188	-.4360	.4777
Equal variances assumed								
11	.741	.393	-.275	62	-.0625	.2273	-.5169	.3919
Equal variances not assumed								
11			-.256	23.01	-.0625	.2442	-.5676	.4426
Equal variances assumed								
12	5.616	.021	-1.041	62	-.1250	.1202	-.3653	.1153
Equal variances not assumed								
12			-1.177	32.77	.248	-.1250	-.3411	.0911
Equal variances assumed								
13	1.281	.262	.953	62	.1875	.1968	-.2059	.5809
Equal variances not assumed								
13			.809	20.42	.1875	.2318	-.2954	.6704
Equal variances assumed								
14	.097	.756	-.143	62	-.0208	.1460	-.3126	.2710
Equal variances assumed								
14			-.141	25.37	-.0208	.1473	-.3239	.2822

Appendix C

Supplemental data 4.14 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics - Qualitative Responses from Principal's Indicative to their Rationale to Modify or Change the Teaming Structure at their Respective Institutions.*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
26. Why are you either looking or not looking to modify or change the current teaming structure in your school?		16	3	19
	Budgetary constraints	1	0	1
	District pressure / a scheduling constraints (addition of singletons and ENL needs are making it difficult to balance student schedules.	1	0	1
	Does not apply.	3	5	8
	Hope to lessen the amount of students on each team.	0	1	1
	I'm a new principal and don't wish to make substantial changes.	1	0	1
	It works and the staff value it. As long as the staff see value and small tweaks are welcome.	1	0	1
	It works well, no change needed.	11	0	11
	Length of school day limits modification / pure teaming only in grade 6.	1	0	1

Looking to expand and increase the current teaming structure.	1	0	1
Looking to team 7 th and 8 th grades.	2	0	2
Perhaps give other responses / provide more comment boxes.	1	0	1
Need to give teachers more time to work together.	0	1	1
Not valuable	0	1	1
Small population assures one team per grade level.	0	1	1
Reduction of population and addition of honors classes has rendered pure teaming impossible with the current model.	1	0	1
Staff retirements and inclusion teacher placements.	1	0	1
Still assessing the effectiveness of the current system.	0	1	1
Strong model.	1	0	1
This is the first year we are teaming in our school.	0	1	1
Through acceleration in math and science, teaming has been negatively impacted.	0	1	1
To give teachers the time to meet as both a grade level team and an interdisciplinary team.	1	0	1

We are looking at block scheduling and removing honors classes.	1	0	1
We are looping 7 th and 8 th grade teams – maintains teaming and adds looping feature for contact time and relationships.	1	0	1
We have 100 students per grade, we naturally team.	0	1	1
We have weekly grade level meetings during which time we discuss and consult with one another about how to best meet the needs of our students.	1	0	1
We just changed it.	2	0	1
Total	48	16	64

Appendix D

Supplemental data 4.23 *Cross Tabulation Descriptive Statistics – Percentage Analysis for Usage of Team Common Planning (Strongly Agree; Agree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree).*

Survey Question	Principal Response	Middle School	Junior High & Junior-Senior High	Total
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Teacher preparation]	Disagree	5	2	7
	Agree	27	7	34
	Strongly Agree	11	3	14
	Total	43	12	55
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Coordination of instruction]	Disagree	5	3	8
	Agree	24	6	30
	Strongly Agree	15	3	18
	Total	44	12	56
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Create assessments]	Strongly Disagree	0	1	1
	Disagree	7	4	11
	Agree	25	5	30

	Strongly Agree	12	2	14
Total		44	12	56
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Discuss students]	Disagree	1	1	2
	Agree	24	6	30
	Strongly Agree	18	5	23
Total		43	12	55
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Conduct conferences]	Strongly Disagree	1	1	2
	Disagree	5	2	7
	Agree	21	6	27
	Strongly Agree	16	3	19
Total		43	12	55
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Plan special events such as field trips]	Strongly Disagree	2	1	3
	Disagree	6	2	8
	Agree	27	6	33

	Strongly Agree	8	3	11
Total		43	12	55
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [IEP / 504 meetings]	Strongly Disagree	3	1	4
	Disagree	13	2	15
	Agree	19	9	28
	Strongly Agree	8	0	8
Total		43	12	55
35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. [Other]	Strongly Disagree	1	1	2
	Disagree	2	0	2
	Agree	9	4	13
	Strongly Agree	6	1	7
Total		18	6	24

Appendix E – Survey Instrument Participation Letter



Division of Administrative
& Instructional Leadership

The School of Education
8000 Utopia Parkway
Sullivan Hall Room 507
Queens, NY 11439
Tel (718) 990-1469

Dear Principal,

You are invited to participate in a research study to learn more about Secondary Principal Perception: A Study of Organizational Structures of Teaming, Common Planning and Advisory in Long Island, New York Secondary Schools. The purpose of the study is to determine the secondary principal's perception to their role as an educational leader; in addition, to their perception of teaming, common planning time and an advisory program as essential middle school priorities to prepare students to achieve, acclimate and be successful upon entering high school. The principals' views will allow the researcher to present a distinctive set of data that may address the gap in the research literature on teaming, common planning an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level.

The study will be conducted by William Galati, Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership, St. John's University, as part of his doctoral dissertation. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be requested to answer demographic questions and complete a Likert survey on your perceptions of the organizational structures of teaming, common planning and an advisory program as validated instructional best practices for students at the secondary level. Participation in the survey is voluntary and can be ended at any time. Participants may skip any questions they do not wish to answer. The estimated time to complete the survey is 10 minutes. There is no known risks associated with your participation in this research and you will receive no direct benefit for your participation in the survey. All collected data will only be analyzed by the researcher and the doctoral study committee. By completing the survey instrument, you are agreeing to all terms, and are granting me permission to use the information.

If you have any questions or to report research related problems, you may contact William Galati at william.galati17@stjohns.edu or the faculty mentor Dr. Anthony Annunziato at annunzia@stjohns.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Dr. Raymond DiGiuseppe, SJU's Institutional Review Board Chair at digiuser@stjohns.edu or Dr. Marie Nitopi, IRB Coordinator at nitopim@stjohns.edu.

Thank you in advance for participating in the survey and in assisting me in my research.

Yours truly,
William Galati
William Galati

Appendix F: Letter of Permission to Use and Modify Survey Instrument

March 7, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I grant William Galati permission to use and modify the survey used in my dissertation.

Sincerely,

Chad Corey

Chad Corey, Ed.D.

Appendix G: IRB Approval Memo



Division of Administrative
& Instructional Leadership

The School of Education
8000 Utopia Parkway
Sullivan Hall Room 507
Queens, NY 11439
Tel (718) 990-1469

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Oct 22, 2019 1:12 PM EDT

PI: Barbara Cozza
CO-PI: Anthony Annunziato
Dept: Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Initial - IRB-FY2020-150 Secondary Principal Perspective: A Study of Organizational Structures of Teaming, Common Planning and Advisory in Long Island, New York Secondary Schools.

Dear Barbara Cozza:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for Secondary Principal Perspective: A Study of Organizational Structures of Teaming, Common Planning and Advisory in Long Island, New York Secondary Schools..

Decision: Exempt

Selected Category: Category 3.(i)(B). Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection.

Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation.

Sincerely,
Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.
IRB Coordinator

Appendix H - Dissertation Survey

Dissertation Topic: Secondary Principal Perspective: A Study of Organizational Structures of Teaming, Common Planning, and Advisory in Long Island, New York Secondary Schools.

* Required

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study in examining a Secondary Principal's Perspective: A Study of Organizational Structures of Teaming, Common Planning, and Advisory in Long Island, New York Secondary Schools. Please respond to the following questions to best provide me with data to support my research findings with respect to leadership and organizational structures specific to common planning, teaming and advisory in the secondary school. Thank you for your anticipated participation. Please be advised that all responses will be kept confidential.

Part I: Leadership

Please respond to the following questions based upon your experience as an educational leader and experience within the field of education.

1. Identify the total years of experience you have in education in any role. * Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 0-5
- ☐ 6 -10
- ☐ 11 -15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ 21 or more

2. Select the title the best describes your current administrative position. * Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Middle School Principal (Grades 6-8)
- ☐ Junior High School Principal (Grades 7-9)
- ☐ Junior-Senior High School Principal (Grades 7-12)

3. How many years have you held this title (as defined in the previous question)? * Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 0-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ 21-25
- ☐ 26-30
- ☐ 31 +

4. Please identify your gender * Mark only one oval.
- ☐ Female
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Prefer not to say
5. Which age range best represents you? * Mark only one oval.
- ☐ 21-29
 - ☐ 30-39
 - ☐ 40-49
 - ☐ 50-59
 - ☐ 60-69
 - ☐ 70-79
 - ☐ 80 +
6. What is the highest academic degree you have earned? * Mark only one oval.
- ☐ Masters
 - ☐ Master and Advanced Graduate Certificate
 - ☐ Doctorate
7. How many students in your district are enrolled in grades 6-8? * Mark only one oval.
- ☐ 900 +
 - ☐ 450 - 899
 - ☐ 250 - 449
 - ☐ 249 – below
8. What is the location of your school considered? Mark only one oval.
- ☐ Urban
 - ☐ Rural
 - ☐ Suburban
9. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to be an instructional leader? * Mark only one oval.
- ☐ Not important
 - ☐ Very important
10. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to be current with organizational structures of common planning, teaming and the use of advisory in educating secondary students? * Mark only one oval.
- ☐ Not important
 - ☐ Very important

11. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to have a thorough understanding of all State policies and procedures? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Not Important
- ☐ Very Important

12. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to maintain a strong working relationship with school faculty and staff? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Not important
- ☐ Very important

13. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to assess teachers for their educational beliefs, values and practices? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Not important
- ☐ Very important

14. In your opinion, how important is it for the principal to provide him/herself with meaningful and relevant professional development to enhance their personal professional knowledge? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Not important
- ☐ Very important

15. Based upon your role as principal, please rate the importance and your level of preparedness. *

Check all that apply.

Understand the specific intellectual, physical, social, and psychological characteristics of students.

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Not Very Important
- ☐ Very Prepared
- ☐ Prepared
- ☐ Not Prepared

16. Based on your role as principal, please rate the importance and level of preparedness. * Check all that apply.

Promote the development of relationships between teachers, parents, and staff, and students.

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Not Very Important
- ☐ Very Prepared
- ☐ Prepared
- ☐ Not Prepared

17. Based on your role as principal, please rate the importance and level of preparedness. * Check all that apply.

Develop organizational structures that ensure students feel cared for and valued.

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Not Very Important
- ☐ Very Prepared
- ☐ Prepared
- ☐ Not Prepared

18. Based on your role as principal, please rate the importance and your level of preparedness. *

Check all that apply.

Provide an environment that is safe, inviting, inclusive, and addresses the developmental needs of students.

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Not Very Important
- ☐ Very Prepared
- ☐ Prepared
- ☐ Not Prepared

Part II: Teaming Information

Please respond to the following questions on the organizational structure of teaming.

19. Does your school use teaming? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. What type(s) of teaming? Please select all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Interdisciplinary
- ☐ Single Grade Level
- ☐ Multiple Grade Level
- ☐ Not Applicable
- ☐ Other: _____

21. In what grade level(s) does teaming occur? Please select all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Grade 6
- ☐ Grade 7
- ☐ Grade 8
- ☐ Grade 9
- ☐ Not Applicable

22. Are students randomly assigned to teams?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

23. Do students remain teamed with the same group of students throughout middle school?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

24. Has the type of teaming structure utilized been changed or altered during your time as a principal?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

25. Are you looking to modify or change the current teaming structure in your school?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

26. Why are you either looking or not looking to modify or change the current teaming structure in your school? *

27. Which staff members are assigned to a team? Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Math teacher
- ☐ Science teacher
- ☐ English teacher
- ☐ Social studies teacher
- ☐ All core academic teachers (math, science, English and social studies)
- ☐ Exploratory / Encore teachers
- ☐ Special Education Teachers
- ☐ English Language Learner (ELL) Teachers
- ☐ School counselor
- ☐ Not Applicable as teaming is not an organizational structure in my school

28. On average, how many academic (math, science, English, social studies) teachers are assigned to a team?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 2 teachers
- ☐ 3 teachers
- ☐ 4 teachers
- ☐ 5 teachers
- ☐ Greater than 5 teachers
- ☐ None

29. On average, what percentage of students would be considered fully teamed in your school?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 100%
- ☐ 75%
- ☐ 50%
- ☐ 25%
- ☐ 0%

30. Does each team have a team facilitator or team leader? Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

31. Please evaluate the following statements regarding teaming. Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teaming has a positive influence on the way classroom instruction is carried out and taught.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaming has a positive influence on the culture of learning within the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaming has a positive influence on the way classroom instruction is carried out and taught.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaming has a positive influence on student learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaming has a positive influence on student behavior.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaming provides students with a greater sense of identify and belonging.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers are proficient with collaboration and communication skills needed to be an effective team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers would benefit from receiving professional development on teaming.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teams have the ability to function in a leadership capacity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part III: Common Planning

Please respond to the following questions based upon the organizational structure of common planning.

32. Does your school have common planning time? * Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

33. Does time for common planning occur in all grades? Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

34. How often does team common planning occur? Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Every other day
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ None

35. What is team common planning used for? Please select all that apply. Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teacher preparation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordination of instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create assessments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discuss students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conduct conferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plan special events such as field trips	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IEP / 504 meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

36. Does grade level common planning occur? Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

37. Has the common planning structure been changed or altered during your time as principal?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

38. Are you looking to modify or change the current common planning structure? If yes, please explain.

39. Please evaluate the following statements * Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Common planning time has a positive influence on the way instruction is carried out and taught.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Common planning time has a positive influence on the culture of learning within the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Common planning time has a positive influence on student learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers would benefit from receiving professional development on how to effectively utilize common planning time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part IV: Advisory

Please respond to the following questions based upon the organizational structure of advisory.

40. Does your school have an advisory period for students? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

41. Does the school day schedule accommodate the purpose of a designated and defined advisory time for students?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

42. If your school has advisory, what grades are provided with this organizational structure?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Grade 6
- ☐ Grade 7
- ☐ Grade 8
- ☐ Grades 6 and 7
- ☐ Grades 7 and 8
- ☐ Grades 6-8
- ☐ Is not offered

43. What is the purpose of advisory through the lens of the building principal? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ To support social and emotional development
- ☐ To guide students with an adult mentor
- ☐ To provide structured time for students to complete homework
- ☐ A time for students to decompress and engage in social activities
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ None of the above

44. On average, for what length of time does advisory occur? Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 20-minute block of time daily
- ☐ A designated period daily
- ☐ A designated time weekly
- ☐ A designated time monthly
- ☐ No designation of time given
- ☐ Not Applicable

45. Has the advisory structure been altered or changed during your time as principal?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

Part V: General Reflection

Please respond to the following questions based upon your philosophy of the organizational structures of teaming, common planning and advisory.

46. Which of the following organizational school structures is most important to you as an administrator? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Teaming
- ☐ Common Planning
- ☐ Advisory
- ☐ All - Teaming, Common Planning and Advisory
- ☐ None are deemed important to consider
- ☐ Other: _____

47. Please evaluate the following statements. * Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The instructional schedule should support the organization of teams.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The instructional schedule should support the structure for common planning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The instructional schedule should support the structure for advisory.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The instructional schedule should support all three organizational structures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The instructional schedule should not support any of the three organizational structures of common planning, teaming or advisory.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Vita

Name	<i>William R. Galati</i>
Current Professional Occupation	<i>Principal, George W. Hewlett High School</i>
High School	<i>St. John the Baptist DHS, West Islip, NY</i>
Date Graduated	<i>June 1984</i>
Baccalaureate Degree	<i>Bachelor of Science/Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg, Maryland Major: Mathematics</i>
Date Graduated	<i>May 1989</i>
Other Degrees and Certificates*	<i>Master of Arts, SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York Major: Mathematics (1993)</i> <i>Master of Arts, SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York Major: Liberal Studies (1995)</i> <i>Professional Diploma in Educational Administration (2000), SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York</i>